

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

Che Guevara: 'Youth must march in the vanguard'

— PAGES 8-10

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 64/NO. 4 JANUARY 31, 2000

King Day rallies back labor, farm, anti-racist struggles

50,000 march to 'take down racist flag'

BY SAM MANUEL

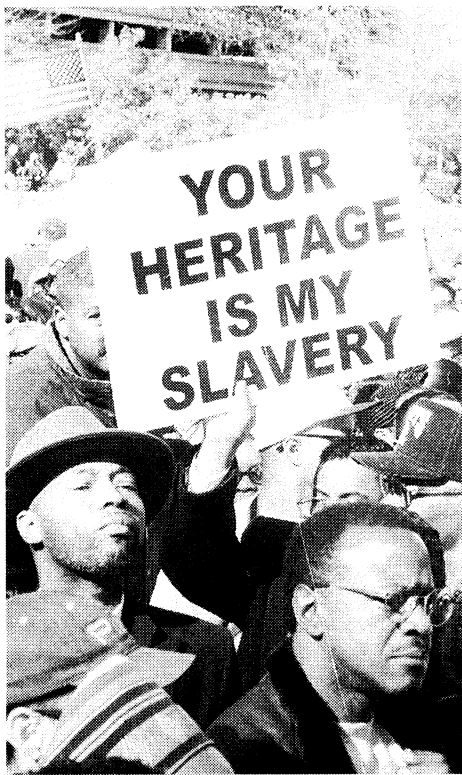
COLUMBIA, South Carolina—In a massive outpouring far exceeding the expectations of rally organizers and city officials, tens of thousands marched through the streets here demanding the Confederate battle flag no longer be flown over the capitol building.

The determined marchers, estimated by police officials at 46,000, wound through the palmetto tree-lined streets chanting, "We're fired up! Take it Down!" and "Hey Hey!, Ho Ho! The racist flag has got to go!"

The crowd filled the park around the state house as marchers overflowed city streets blocks away. It was the largest civil rights march ever in the state, possibly in the South.

The flag was installed there in 1962 by the state legislature as a calculated insult and in defiance of the advancing civil rights movement. The march was one of many across the country commemorating slain civil rights leader Martin Luther King Jr. South Carolina is the only state in the nation not to officially recognize the federal holiday.

The mobilization was a crushing answer as well to a rally of 6,000 supporters of the Confederate battle flag that took place on the same



Militant/Floyd Fowler

Powerful rebuttal of racism in S. Carolina

spot the week before. In signs, chants, and speeches, marchers answered racist remarks and defense of the flag over the previous week.

Groups of youths chanted and carried signs reading, "Who's Retarded Now!" a reference

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Decatur rally protests school expulsions

BY ELYSE HATHAWAY

DECATUR, Illinois—Hundreds of supporters of seven students expelled from a Decatur high school rallied here January 15.

The rally protested a federal judge's decision to uphold the city school board in its expulsion of the students, and to honor the contributions of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

This past September, the board expelled six students from school for two years after a fist fight broke out during a high school football game. Another dropped out before being disciplined. All seven students are Black.

Six of the students filed suit against the school board for violating their right to due process during the expulsion hearing. Later, in a summation at the trial, the students' lawyers added that the school board used racial discrimination in imposing the harsh penalty.

The students' lawyers plan to appeal the judge's ruling.

The rallies and marches, which began in October, have pushed the school board back. Instead of the original two years, the expulsions have been shortened to one year. Two of the students will be able to graduate on time

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Farmers and strikers lead Atlanta action

BY STEPHEN BLOODWORTH

ATLANTA—Striking workers and fighting farmers provided a militant spirit of struggle to the King Day march and rally here January 17.

Thousands of people lined Auburn Avenue in downtown Atlanta to celebrate the birthday of civil rights leader Martin Luther King, Jr. They watched and cheered on the march, the main event marking the annual King Day Celebration.

The event traditionally has numerous contingents of trade unionists, and they composed a larger part of the parade. At least 15 different labor organizations participated this year.

Groups of unionists intermixed with high school marching bands and various political groups pressing their demands. Civic and par-



Support the Black Fa



Militant/Linda Joyce

Martin Luther King Day march in Atlanta

ent/teacher organizations, Boy Scouts, step groups, drum and dance troupes, fraternities, and others also joined in.

What onlookers had not seen in previous annual marches was a contingent of about 30 Black farmers, many clad in the green hats and T-shirts donning the name and logo of the Black Farmers and Agriculturalists Association, or BFAA.

Together they, along with about 40 Teamsters on strike at Overnite trucking in their red union T-shirts, formed the head of the march. The strikers were predominantly from Teamsters Local 728 in Atlanta, who have been on strike since the end of October.

Prior to the march, the farmers organized a breakfast and BFAA meeting to discuss the obstacles they are encountering in receiving compensation for past injustices and racist practices by the United States Department of

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Miners in Australia resist union busting

BY LINDA HARRIS

SYDNEY, Australia—In a series of strikes here, steelworkers, iron ore miners, power plant workers, airline baggage handlers, and construction workers are standing up to union-

busting moves by several major companies.

The largest number of walkouts oppose the attempt by BHP to break collective bargaining with the unions and impose individual contracts on workers.

In November, BHP refused to negotiate with iron ore miners in the Pilbara region of Western Australia, offering individual nonunion employment contracts to the 950 workers at their Port Hedland and Mount Newman mines instead.

The two main unions covering workers at BHP Iron Ore are the Australian Workers Union (AWU) and the Construction, Forestry, Mining and Energy Union (CFMEU).

BHP is a giant Australian-based industrial corporation with major operations in steel, mining, and oil around the world. Graeme Hunt, head of BHP's Iron Ore division, said that BHP needed to get in a better competitive position with rivals such as Rio Tinto, which is in the forefront of the bosses' attacks on unions, from its operations in Western Australia to its coal mines in New South Wales.

Peter Reith, the minister for workplace relations, commended BHP's move. Reith has spearheaded the federal government's anti-union legislation and led its union-busting campaign against the Maritime Union of Australia (MUA) in 1998.

BHP offered its iron ore miners a "choice" of working under basic award conditions or taking a 6 percent pay raise—of up to \$A 10,000 a year—and a better superannuation [pension] deal on an individual contract.

Tim Daly, West Australian secretary of the AWU, said that BHP was using its iron ore work force as guinea pigs to implement change across the company.

About 800 workers attended stop-work meetings in Port Hedland and Newman in mid-November to protest plans to introduce individual contracts at BHP Iron Ore.

The union held a rally outside BHP's Perth

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Students in Mexico reject offer

On January 7 students at the National Autonomous University of Mexico rejected an offer by university officials designed to end their strike and occupation of university facilities. Students struck the university on April 20, 1999, after the administration decided to impose tuition fees of around \$140 per year. The students demand that tertiary education be established as a universal right. They have organized many public protests to back their demands and to win support in Mexico City and beyond.

At the talks the officials offered to eliminate the tuition fee proposal—a concession already won early in the action. The students explained after the breakdown of the talks that they are calling for the release of several of those arrested during a December 11 demonstration outside the U.S. embassy. The university has a total enrollment of 268,000 students, making it the largest in Mexico.

Antimissile test a failure

A test of the antimissile system under development by the U.S. military failed January 18, when the interceptor missed its target. This followed revelations by weapons experts that cast doubt over a test last year of a key component of the system.

The Pentagon conducted the test on October 2 and released the results with much fanfare. They claimed that a newly developed “kill” vehicle intercepted a dummy missile, on the way avoiding a decoy balloon. Some analysts now claim that the decoy object drifted close to the missile and may have helped guide the interceptor.

President William Clinton is due to decide this summer whether to proceed with deployment of the system. Indications are that the U.S. rulers will press ahead with the scheme despite the technical difficulties it presents. Washington seeks a first-strike nuclear capability against Moscow and Beijing in particular.

U.S. rulers arm Colombian regime

Under cover of fighting trade in cocaine and heroin, U.S. president Clinton has decided to provide \$1.6 billion to the Colombian government over the coming two years. Most will be funneled to the Colombian

Tokyo firm puts plutonium use on hold



“Is this Chernobyl? Protesting the nuclear accident in Tokaimura,” reads the banner carried by protesters outside the Japanese government’s nuclear agency in Tokyo last October. In mid-January the director of Tokyo’s electric power company postponed plans to use a new plutonium fuel in response to the growing opposition to nuclear power. Last September a worker died and scores of people were injured in an accident at a nuclear reprocessing plant at Tokaimura.

military. U.S. officials announced on January 14 that 3,000 “counternarcotics” military personnel and 500 police would be trained by the end of the year. Attack helicopters will be provided.

A former national security adviser to the Colombian government said the aid “is really destined for the counterinsurgency war.” Bogotá is fighting a bloody war against guerrillas organized in FARC, or the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia—a war which has taken more than 30,000 lives in the last 35 years. The guerrilla forces now control one-third of the country in its southern regions. On January 14 U.S. secretary of state Madeleine Albright was given a red-carpet welcome by Colombian president Andrés Pastrana. After Egypt and Israel, Colombia is the largest recipient of U.S. military aid. “We’re getting this money because the situation is so serious,” said political commentator José

Ramírez.

Poisonous legacy in Panama

Working people celebrated in Panama as Washington handed over ownership of the Panama Canal. Controversy in the Central American country is brewing as the full scale of the U.S. military’s ecological damage is revealed. About 105,000 exploded bombs lie in 7,844 acres of rain forest used as a live firing range for 80 years. Washington has repeatedly refused to hand over a document listing sites where chemical weapons are buried.

U.S. president Clinton insists that his government has met its obligations to clean up the area. The Pentagon claims that most of the 55,000 acres of land used for military exercises have been cleared, and that to clear the remaining land would endanger the forest. Daniel Delgado, who formerly chaired a Panamanian-U.S. joint committee dealing with military issues, disagreed. “The argument that they were protecting the forest isn’t a valid one,” he said, explaining that the cleanup took the Pentagon eight months, when comparable efforts in the United States take 10 to 15 years.

Gaza: an open-air prison

Electric fences and Israeli troops have helped to turn the Gaza Strip into an “open-air prison,” in the words of one economist working there. Workers cannot get permits to travel to Israel for their jobs. Traders and farmers have their trucks stopped at the border. Israeli troops run “security checks,” which require the loading of produce from one truck to another. Vehicles sometimes wait three or four days at the crossing to Jordan.

Palestinians say that the Israeli govern-

ment uses security checks to protect the products of Israeli capitalism from competition. Many greeted the 1993 agreement for Israeli withdrawal and for partial self-rule as an opportunity for agricultural producers exploiting the area’s fertile soil. Today, working people in the area are worse off than before the agreement. Personal income has plunged by 20 percent, standing now at less than one-tenth the average income in Israel.

Hungary: rail workers strike

Demanding a pay increase of 14 percent, rail workers in Hungary struck the Hungarian State Railways on January 10. The strike lasted 60 hours. The head of the railway workers’ union, Imre Markus, said that only 455 of the average 2,830 passenger trains and 16 of the 1,100 freight trains would operate. The strike closed down the country’s borders to rail traffic. Union members rejected the railway management’s offer of an 8.5 percent increase. Unionists also opposed attempts to deny union rights, including use of office space and telephones, free travel on trains, and allowing union representatives to work for the union on company time.

Two million homeless in the U.S.

Rough estimates based on 1996 figures compiled in a survey released on December 8 indicate that nearly 2 million people are forced to find shelter or sleep on the streets each night in the United States. The comparable figure nine years before was up to 600,000. Of those surveyed, two-thirds were suffering from infectious or chronic diseases, excluding AIDS, and 55 percent lacked health insurance. Their average income amounted to half the official poverty level.

Martha Burt of the Urban Institute, which prepared the report, noted that the homeless rates are rising in a period of economic expansion. “Rising rents and a steep decline in housing subsidies have left 5.3 million poor families in housing that [is] unaffordable or severely substandard,” she said.

High Court to take up abortion

For the first time in nearly a decade the U.S. Supreme Court will take on an abortion case. The court will address a Nebraska state law that has been frozen by legal action since it was passed in 1997. The law bans a type of procedure the state dubs “partial birth” abortion. A federal appeals court struck down the law, stating in its judgment that the term has no “medical or legal content.” Another federal court, however, upheld similar laws in Wisconsin and Illinois, and the resultant legal tangle provides the Supreme Court with grounds for intervention.

Politicians and others opposed to abortion rights have zeroed in on this question, and on specific procedures used up to the 24th week of pregnancy. A small number of abortions are directly involved, but at issue is the widely supported principle of a woman’s right to choose.

—PATRICK O’NEILL

THE MILITANT

Join antiracist struggles

Thousands of working people recently marched in the streets of South Carolina to demand the removal of the Confederate flag from the capitol building. In Decatur, Illinois, hundreds protested the expulsions of seven Black high school students there. The ‘Militant’ brings you coverage of these antiracist actions and explains how they highlight the rise in working-class resistance to the capitalist exploiters. Don’t miss a single issue!



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The Militant

Vol. 64/No. 4

Closing news date: January 20, 2000

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Published weekly except for one week in December and biweekly from July to August by the Militant (ISSN 0026-3885), 410 West St., New York, NY 10014. Telephone: (212) 243-6392; Fax (212) 924-6040.

The Militant can be reached via CompuServe at: TheMilitant

Internet: TheMilitant@compuserve.com

The Militant website can be accessed on the internet at: www.themilitant.com

Correspondence concerning subscriptions or changes of address should be addressed to The Militant Business Office, 410 West St., New York, NY 10014.

Periodicals postage paid at New York, NY.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to the Militant, 410 West St., New York, NY 10014.

Subscriptions: **United States:** for one-year subscription send \$45 to above address.

Latin America, Caribbean: for one-year sub-

scription send \$65, drawn on a U.S. bank, to above address. By first-class (airmail), send \$80. **Asia:** send \$80 drawn on a U.S. bank to 410 West St., New York, NY 10014.

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Palestinians in Lebanon say: 'We will never give up the fight for our homeland'

BY GEORGES MEHRABIAN

BEIRUT, Lebanon—Media reports on the talks between the Israeli government and the Palestinian Authority present the question of Palestine as well on the way to being resolved. The fact that more than 4 million Palestinians live outside the confines of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, which define the territory of a possible Palestinian state, is hardly ever mentioned.

The creation of the Israeli state was based upon the disposition of the Palestinian people from their land. Mass expulsions began in 1948 and have continued until today. Walking through the tiny alleyways of the Shatila refugee camp just outside the city here, the 1982 massacre that occurred during the Israeli military occupation of the city is still an issue.

The occupation followed a massive Israeli invasion of the country, aimed at dealing a decisive military and political blow to the Palestinian movement.

"Right here lie about 3,000 women, children, and men, young and old, about half of whom were Lebanese," said camp resident Khoder. "They were butchered by the fascist militias as Israeli troops looked on." The cemetery is a plot of land about 400 square meters. "As you can see there is no monument, no tombstone, no marker. These people are yet to be buried with the dignity they deserve," said Khoder.

Mai Masri, the Palestinian director of the award-winning movie documentary "Children of Shatila," added, "Until recently the plot was a garbage dump. It took a struggle by Palestinian youth to just clean it up."

"Shatila was leveled three times in less than 10 years," Khoder explained. "The last time was in the 1985-1987 camp wars, which pitted the Palestinian fighters against the Shiite Amal militias."

"About 7,000 Palestinians still live in this camp," explained Khoder. "What has changed is that some 11,000 Lebanese war refugees from the south as well as Syrian workers also now live in the camp. And Gypsies have settled right on the outskirts."

The Palestinian Human Rights Organization in the camp include Palestinians and Lebanese. Such committees exist in a number of camps and involve Palestinian youth. We met with four Palestinians and a Lebanese member of the organization.

Palestinians in Lebanon "face a very difficult situation," said committee member Bassam. "The PLO accords with Israel have

left us in a state of suspension. It is evident that our right to return to Palestine, to our old towns and villages, is not even on the agenda of the agreements. Even if we are not strong enough right now, our struggle will one day be on the rise again. In 50 years they have failed to make us forget our home! One day we shall return," he vowed.

"After 50 years in Lebanon, the 370,000 Palestinians still face severe social discrimination," said Kahtan, another member of the organization. "We are denied basic rights as residents of the country. Palestinians cannot hold over 70 categories of jobs by law and you pay taxes but get none of the social security benefits that other workers are entitled to."

Bassam added, "We are fighting for the civic rights that any human being is entitled to. As long as we are forced by the Israelis to live outside our country, Palestine, we are entitled to live with some dignity. We are not demanding to become Lebanese citizens because we will never give up our own homeland, but these restrictive laws on Palestinian refugees must be lifted."

A small building in the camp houses a school run by the Palestinian women's organization, Najdeh, Arabic for assistance. Nuhail, a camp resident and director of the school, said, "Since the accords the conditions in the camps have gotten substantially worse. UNRWA [United Nations Relief Works Administration] has been cutting back on its services. Just a few years ago they used to have three schools operating here and now it is down to one."

"We had demonstrations in front of the UNRWA headquarters in Beirut against deteriorating school conditions as well as a decision to make refugees pay for notebooks, pencils, and a small tuition. In addition to that the PLO institutions and funds have been pulled out. We have been totally



Beirut protest in 1994 by Palestinians from Tal El Zaatar camp against expulsion from Federal Hotel where they had been squatting.

left to fend for ourselves," she said.

Khoder says he thinks the prospect of a Palestinian state being set up in at least parts of the West Bank and Gaza Strip is "not a solution for us here. It will still be too weak to do anything." Nuhail adds, "We are not opposed to it though. It will give a boost to our identity as Palestinians, such as a passport and embassies. This is a big thing for a stateless people."

The Palestinian youth center Ajial, or 'Generations, is newly set up in the middle of Beirut. Palestinian youth from several camps are involved there, including Ain El Helwe, the largest in south Lebanon. It is not unusual for several dozen Palestinian and Lebanese youth to be meeting there, holding classes and discussions.

The walls are full of maps of historic Palestine and the villages that were cleared of their Palestinian population by the Zionist settlers in 1948.

'Wall Street Journal' urges Chinese regime to start dealing with the 'socialism question'

BY MAURICE WILLIAMS

The Clinton administration is gearing up for a campaign to push for Congressional approval of the trade pact signed with Beijing last November. If ratified, the agreement will help to clear the road for China's entry into the World Trade Organization.

The Chinese government announced January 9 some initial steps to implement market "reforms" demanded by the White House as part of the deal. The moves include plans by Beijing to curb state control over banks and telecommunications in China and ease restrictions on foreign investors.

A layer of U.S. ruling class figures, while heartened by these moves, gave a blunt assessment and open recognition of the obstacles facing both imperialism and the Chinese bureaucracy in imposing the "reforms" on workers.

If the government presses ahead on these "broad initiatives," the editors of the *Wall Street Journal* asserted in an editorial, "millions more Chinese workers will be laid off." Discerning the "risk of social unrest" that will accompany such a "painful period of adjustment," the editors of the *Journal* said, "There is also reason to be cautious."

Washington and its imperialist allies seek to overturn the state monopoly of foreign trade, nationalized property, and economic planning—the foundations of the workers state in China. The U.S. rulers, however, are not confident the Chinese regime can carry through with what is needed to make work-

ing people give up on the historic social conquests of the Chinese revolution and accept the reimposition of capitalist property relations.

The workers' "cradle-to-grave job guarantees" are at stake, the *Wall Street Journal* noted, so "what can [the Chinese government] say that will keep them from demonstrating in front of local Party offices? The financial daily's editors are worried that Beijing "does not seem to be preparing the population for the change with any efforts at political reform."

"Such a major rewriting of the social contract," the *Journal's* editors say, will make workers "complain, with some justification, that they are being cheated out of the job security China had traditionally guaranteed."

An even more pointed question unemployed workers will ask, they point out, is "why is the socialist sector shrinking while the capitalists are getting rich? This is more than a semantic point."

Disappointed, the *Journal* concludes that the regime headed by Jiang Zemin will "fudge the socialism question." But, they demand, "It is time to tell China's workers the truth about the coming transition."

Meanwhile, the White House continues its propaganda campaign against the ruling Chinese bureaucracy, citing its "human rights record." "Over the past year the government of China intensified its crackdown on political dissent," declared State Department spokesman James Rubin on January

11. He qualified the tough talk, however, in an effort to promote trade relations. "We engage with China to advance our national interests," Rubin added.

U.S. rulers seek to extract more concessions from the Chinese government, pressing them to open China's economy to U.S. investments. The trade agreement will, "at least on paper, pry open parts of the Chinese economy that Beijing has tended to shelter from foreign competition," the *New York Times* reported January 11.

Supreme Court strikes blow at rights

BY MAURICE WILLIAMS

The Supreme Court struck a blow against the Fourth Amendment's bar against unreasonable searches with a January 12 ruling that authorizes cops to search and frisk someone on the streets if the police deem the person is "suspicious" and fleeing from them.

Anyone trying to avoid the police whether walking away or running from them can be detained.

"Headlong flight—whenever it occurs—is the consummate act of evasion," Chief Justice William Rehnquist wrote in the court decision. He added that "allowing such detentions...accepts the risk that officers may stop innocent people."

Some people might have good reasons for

Bashar is a young Palestinian, a member of Ajial, and a member of the Palestinian Campaign for the Right To Return. The group has organized a festival attended by 4,000, as well as put on film showings and distributed informational material such as a newly released CD Rom, entitled "We Shall Return."

"One of our main aims here is to keep the memory of Palestine alive among the new generation," Bashar said. "We must know where we come from and the long history of our people's struggle to return." The group is "neither for nor against [Palestine Liberation Organization Chairman Yasser] Arafat or any of the other Palestinian parties. The Palestinian cause is not tied to any individuals; it is a people's movement," he said.

As the possibility of an Israeli withdrawal from southern Lebanon is posed, Lebanese government officials are seeking to insure a vacuum is not created for Lebanese fighters for national sovereignty or Palestinians struggling for self-determination to press forward their demands.

For example, Michel Murr, the Lebanese minister of interior, issued a warning to all Palestinians — especially those in the south — in response to an Israeli government announcement it would unilaterally withdraw its military occupation force from southern Lebanon. Murr stated that Palestinians "could foment troubles in south Lebanon in case of an Israeli withdrawal." He said appropriate security measures would be taken in response.

In the south of Lebanon the atmosphere is tense around the Ain El Helwe camp. Everyone entering must pass through Lebanese army roadblocks and the entire camp is surrounded by army troops. Cannons can be seen on the hill just outside the camp. Security inside the camp is in the hands of the Fatah members of PLO Chairman Arafat.

"All the camps in the south are surrounded by the army," said Salah, a young plaster worker and member of Ajial. "The three camps further south are practically under army siege. If you drive into the camp with a water faucet it gets confiscated under the pretext that it is a permanent building material. The situation is very hard. They want to force people to leave. Now that negotiations [between Israel and the Palestinian Authority] have entered the final status stage, the Lebanese government is worried that it will get stuck with the Palestinian refugees here."

On November 22 more than 500 Palestinians in Ain El Helwe held a protest at the army checkpoint against the siege of the camps. A scuffle with the Lebanese army led to a soldier being slightly wounded.

A recent concert in Beirut is another example of the spirit of many Palestinians and Lebanese. Hundreds of young people lined up hours ahead of the opening to hear Palestinian poet Mahmoud Darwish and Lebanese singer and composer Marcel Khalife. Darwish left Lebanon in 1982 with the PLO fighters when they evacuated Beirut. This was the first time he was allowed to return. By the time the program began, more than 4,000 people packed the theater and the crowd overflowed into the courtyard where a big screen was set up.

Maria Plessa and Natasha Terlexis contributed to this article.

YS reaches out to student protests in Sweden

This column is written and edited by the Young Socialists (YS), an international organization of young workers, students, and other youth fighting for socialism. For more information about the YS write to: Young Socialists, 3284 23rd St., San Francisco, CA, 94110. Tel: (415) 824-1429. E-mail: 105162.605@compuserve.com

BY JOHAN NILSSON
AND CLAUDIO BURGOS

UMEÅ, Sweden—In early December a team of Young Socialists and Communist League members came this city, located in the north of Sweden.

A couple of weeks earlier students and teachers took to the streets to protest major cutbacks planned in the school budget. Some 1,500 people marched in the largest action, one of the biggest demonstrations in this city's history. As a result, the city government had to back down on several of the planned cutbacks.

The aim of the Young Socialists' trip was to link up with this resistance. Our team went to several high schools and the local university. We sold the *Militant* at the Volvo manufacturing plant and through door-to-door sales in working-class communities. The

team also visited several libraries and bookstores to introduce *Capitalism's World Disorder* and other Pathfinder titles. We wanted to get the book into the hands of students and workers in this city, and at the same time give a boost to our campaign in Sweden to sell this book as a revolutionary tool for fighters everywhere. Another challenge for the team was to meet fighting youth interested in a revolutionary youth organization, the Young Socialists.

At one high school, 18-year-old Ellen Dahlgren said, "The best moment in the demonstration was when people spontaneously started shouting 'Do we want cutbacks? No!,' which was in response to the politicians' unwillingness to give an answer to that very question."

Björn Runeson, 19 years old, said that 1,000 students from his school participated in the demonstration. "It was a victory," he said.

Altogether the team sold 23 copies of the *Militant*, four copies of *Capitalism's World Disorder*, a copy of *Nueva Internacional*, three copies of *Malcolm X Talks to Young People* and the *Communist Manifesto*, by Karl Marx and Frederick Engels. In our visits to the libraries and bookstores we received orders for

a number of Pathfinder titles. Among them, the city library bought 15 new titles. A young person met by the team later ordered a subscription to the *Militant*.



BY LAWRENCE MIKESH

ATLANTA—Nine members of the Young Socialists along with four other youth from Detroit, Birmingham, Minneapolis, and Atlanta attended the January 17 Martin Luther King Day parade here.

Our aim was to connect up with and speak to youth, workers, and farmers supporting the struggle of the Black Farmers and Agriculturalists Association (BFAA) and strikers at Overnite trucking company fighting to win recognition for the Teamsters union. The farmers, their supporters, and the Overnight strikers led the parade, which added a political and fighting aspect to the celebrations. The Young Socialists joined and marched with the two contingents.

With several literature tables placed throughout the length of the demonstration, we were able to sell a number of Pathfinder titles, talk with youth and farmers, and learn about various struggles and experiences.

Nate Paulsen, a college student from Minneapolis who last year joined a rally of farmers in Washington, D.C., was able to have numerous conversations with farmers of the BFAA. "These farmers have educated themselves immensely on the broader farm crisis in this country," he said afterwards. "I admire them for using this opportunity to get out and defend themselves from the racist actions of the USDA [U.S. Department of Agriculture] and the U.S. government."

Shortly before the march and rally, Paul Cornish, a leader of the Young Socialists in Atlanta, spoke before several local university fraternities. He explained that the YS is an "organization that provides a revolutionary perspective for youth to move forward. It supports the Black farmers and Overnight strikers."

Ari Paul, a youth from Atlanta who was familiar with Pathfinder literature, was asked by a YS member as he was sitting on the street, "want to march with the farmers?" For the rest of the parade, Paul helped to carry the banner of the Socialist Workers Party and Young Socialists which read: "Justice for Black Farmers! Support Overnight Strikers! Organize the South! For a Workers and Farmers Government!"

50,000 rally to 'take down flag'

Continued from front page

to comments made by South Carolina State Sen. Arthur Ravenel during the racist rally. Ravenel called the NAACP the "National Association of Retarded People," and added to that insult by issuing an apology to retarded people for "lumping them in with the NAACP."

Such inflammatory rhetoric and symbolism has been the stock and trade of racist supporters of the confederate flag. Their rally, for example, began with a memorial at a confederate cemetery. It included musket fire salutes by civil war re-enactors dressed in Rebel uniforms.

Speaking to that rally, Carolina State Republican Rep. John Altman declared, "If they keep trying to bring it down, they're going to find out why they call it a battle flag." The crossed "Stars and Bars" which flies above the capital was never adopted as the official flag of the confederacy. It was carried by confederate troops in battle.

South Carolina is the only state to fly the confederate battle flag over the state capitol. Several other southern states have incorporated the confederate emblem into their state flag. The NAACP launched an economic boycott of tourism in South Carolina until the flag is removed. The Georgia chapter of Operation Push has announced plans for a similar boycott there demanding the confederate emblems be removed from the state flag.

Most of the largely Black and young marchers came from throughout South Carolina and the surrounding region including Alabama, North Carolina, Georgia, and Virginia. Sarah Jackson proudly reported she had come along with four busloads of people from the Baltimore, Maryland, area.

The NAACP organized a number of contingents with large banners. Its president, Kweisi Mfume, was the keynote speaker at the rally. "Bigotry, racism, and racist symbols will not be allowed to go unchallenged," the NAACP leader said. "Racism, sexism, bigotry are wrong! Immigrant bashing is wrong! No lie goes unchallenged forever. We will continue to march and boycott until that flag flies no more," he said to cheers from the crowd.

Many working people had taken the day off for the march. The flag is "coming down!" Clarence Kinloch a steelworker at Georgetown Steel in nearby Georgetown, South Carolina, confidently explained. "I had to be here to let them know that." Kinloch, a veteran of civil rights struggles in the area, pointed out, "There hasn't been a protest like this in this city. They can't stand up to us now. All that's left is for those bigots in the state house to figure out a way to take it down without losing face."

Kinloch also raises goats, chickens, ducks, and geese on his 15-acre farm. He recounted how segregationists in charge of local Department of Agriculture offices would use default on taxes to take away Black farmers' land. "We fought that and got it changed and we will bring down that flag," he added.

Marcus Ashford from here in Columbia works at Michelin Tire. He went to Continental General Tire when the company put ads in the paper for hiring. When he got there and saw picket lines of steelworkers on strike, he turned around and went home.

"I came to be part of this monumental event," he said. "The flag should come down. These kinds of numbers is the best way to get our views out."

Bryant Gary came from Aiken, South Carolina, in a 40-vehicle caravan, including a bus from his church. "The NAACP in Columbia called all the area churches asking those who had buses to organize to bring people to this march. So we're here."

The debate over removing the racist symbol spilled over into the presidential candidates' debates. Republican front-runner George W. Bush has refused to condemn the flying of the confederate battle flag saying it is an issue to be decided by South Carolinians. He has also declined to condemn Ravenel's remarks, calling them simply "unfortunate."

When Republican candidate Alan Keyes, who is Black, demanded the Republican party take its distance from Ravenel, Bush backpedaled, stating, "His comments are out of line and we should repudiate them."

During an appearance on the CBS program "Face the Nation," McCain called the confederate flag "offensive" and "a symbol of racism and slavery," but added that he understood how others see it differently. He followed that statement up with a written clarification: "Personally, I see the battle flag as a symbol of heritage," it read in part.

'Not my heritage'

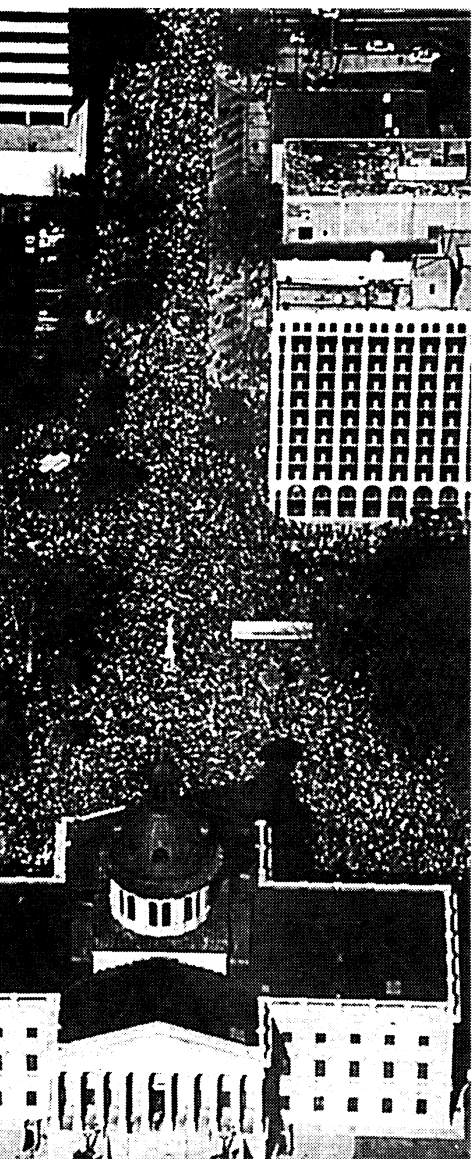
Several groups of young whites and Blacks at the march carried signs reading, "Not My Heritage!" and "Your Heritage is My Slavery!"

Stephen Williams, Rusty Jones, and Will Grice—all 18-year-olds—are students at nearby University of South Carolina and came to the rally together. Each of them is white.

"We're not with any group, we just decided to come," explained Jones. "That flag is the past. It's not who we are!" "It's a flag of traitors!," added Grice. They nodded agreement with Williams who said, "It's not just offensive to Blacks. It's offensive when they say it's part of my heritage. That flag doesn't stand for me!"

In response to the march, Governor Jim Hodges, who told the local press he did not participate because he needed neutrality to negotiate a compromise, said the size of the action "creates a sense of urgency to get this issue resolved."

One compromise floated this past week was by conservative columnist George Will, who proposed the flag be "moved to a



March of 50,000 in Columbia, South Carolina.

Confederate monument not yet built on the capitol grounds and the governor would press to make Martin Luther King's birthday a state holiday."

Responding to this proposal, right-wing columnist Samuel Francis condemned this as "surrendering on the flag" and urged "South Carolinians" to "do whatever it takes to keep the identity and the heritage their Confederate flag symbolizes."

University of South Carolina student Nicole Thompson said, "I've lived here all my life. The flag has been there all my life. It's time for it to come down. That flag represents rape, murder, and terror. That's not the distant past. It's recent history."

Pointing to the capitol dome, Nancy Clifton, from here, said, "My great-grandfather carried the stones that built that structure. I'm here in his memory. It [the flag] was put up there 100 years after the civil war as a statement to Blacks that it still wasn't over. For that reason it needs to come down."

Sam Manuel is a freight railroad conductor and member of the United Transportation Union in Washington, D.C. Floyd Fowler from Atlanta, Bernie Senter from San Francisco, and Greg McCartan from Boston contributed to this article.

Philadelphia students demand more funding for public schools

BY REBECCA ARENSEN

PHILADELPHIA—A march demanding equality in funding for public education drew more than 100 students, teachers, and other supporters to City Hall here on January 17.

The march was sponsored by the Philadelphia Student Union, a coalition of high school students from a number of area schools. "Make Martin Luther King Day a Day of Action!!" was the headline on the leaflet for the demonstration.

Before the march, a dozen students held an overnight outdoor hunger strike in bitter cold at the state office building. Jessicah Smith, a Student Union leader and graduate of West Philadelphia High, said in an interview, "We had a hunger strike to show that we're hungry for education."

After a spirited march from the state building to city hall, students spoke and performed rap to demand an end to inequality

in school funding. "We need more money for updated books, new gym uniforms, new outlets, lots of things," Bryheem Crowder, a 10th grade student at Bartram High said. "I'm in the arts and humanities program and we don't even have a music teacher. It's totally unfair."

Speakers said that schools in Philadelphia receive \$2,000 less per student than suburban schools.

"It's racist, because this means minorities will get less money for education than white kids," Joshua Block, a student at Friends Select High, told the crowd. "It seems to me that schools today are preparing us more for prison than college."

Students vowed further actions to continue to press for more funds for inner city schools.

Rebecca Arenson is a member of the International Association of Machinists.

King Day marchers snap up socialist books

BY GREG McCARTAN

Participants in the Martin Luther King Day activities in Atlanta purchased 145 copies of the *Militant* and five subscriptions to the paper. Four marchers bought copies of *Capitalism World Disorder* as well.

"An open house at the Pathfinder Bookstore was packed," reported Norton Sandler. "About 70 people came in during the day. We organized a program featuring James Harris, chairperson of the Socialist Workers Party in Georgia; Jason Alessio, a national leader of the Young Socialists; and Rollande Girard, the party's candidate for mayor of Miami-Dade County in Florida."

The bookstore is located right on the march route. "Six farmers came by as well as young people from many different

states," Sandler said. Socialist workers and youth set up five literature tables and sold \$250 worth of Pathfinder literature.

In Columbia, South Carolina, marchers picked up 70 copies of the *Militant* and 10 Pathfinder books. Two subscribed to the paper. One participant suggested a nearby bookstore might be interested in carrying Pathfinder titles. Mary Martin from Washington, D.C., and Floyd Fowler from Atlanta visited the buyer there at the end of the day. She purchased two copies of *Capitalism's World Disorder* on the spot and expressed an interest in ordering a range of other titles.

The following day a team, which included two members of the Young Socialists, set up an all-day table at the University of South Carolina. They contacted a person who had

expressed interest in *Capitalism's World Disorder* the previous day at the march, who decided to purchase a copy.

Mary Martin writes, "We met many students who had been at the demonstration the previous day who were proud of their protest." Eight students signed up for more information on the Young Socialists and 22 people purchased copies of the *Militant*.



BY ERNIE MAILHOT

"Socialist workers who are members of the International Association of Machinists (IAM) sold 80 copies of *Capitalism's World Disorder* to unionists and other fighters," reported Rebecca Arenson, from Philadelphia. "We also placed 73 copies in book-

stores around the country. We're well over our total goal of 125."

Nancy Cole said they placed eight books in stores in the Philadelphia region "in conjunction with other political work we were doing. When we put in applications for a job in West Chester, we visited bookstores in the area which led to the placement of two books. We sold one book to a co-worker after going with him to the picket line of strikers against Overnite trucking."

"In Seattle we surpassed all of our targets," said Scott Breen, a member of the IAM at Boeing. "John Naubert and myself sold four copies of *Capitalism's World Disorder* to co-workers, four to steelworkers on lockout at Kaiser, and one to a carpenter during the World Trade Organization protests. Two of the Kaiser workers bought their copies at the WTO events as well. In addition, we placed 11 copies of the book in bookstores and libraries."

"During a trip to Spokane in October, we visited bookstores and also had lengthy political discussions with two locked-out steelworkers, one of whom is also a farmer. One is reading *Capitalism's World Disorder*. He got a subscription to the *Militant* too," added Breen.

Socialists in the IAM in Washington, D.C., visited eight bookstores, three of which took books. Like other places where *Capitalism's World Disorder* was placed, most of these stores had been suggested by co-workers, including an Islamic bookstore suggested by a Turkish co-worker.

"Although most of the books in the store were in Arabic, the owner was impressed by pictures in *Capitalism's World Disorder* of demonstrators in Algeria and protests in New Jersey against harassment in the Arab community," said Janice Lynn, an IAM member at United Airlines.

Lynn and Mary Martin, another IAM member who works at Northwest Airlines in Washington, D.C., made a number of visits to the Newport News shipyard strike last year. Three strikers bought *Capitalism's World Disorder*. "The sales happened after many visits to the picket line and many discussions," explained Lynn. "Some people said to get back to them after the strike and they would get the book. One co-worker at Northwest bought the book after we pointed out the part on the Aircraft Mechanics Fraternal Association that explains craft unionism and the section on fascism and Patrick Buchanan. He also bought the book on the Eastern Airlines strike," she said.

Farmers, strikers lead Atlanta action

Continued from front page

Agriculture (USDA). About 80 people, mostly working farmers from a dozen different states, attended the meeting.

The farmers are protesting the fact that the USDA has not carried out the terms of the consent decree of the class action lawsuit on their behalf that was settled last year. Farmers were to receive both financial compensation and debt relief for years of loan denials and foreclosures that could be traced to the racist policies of the USDA. To this date, according to these farmers, very little of either has been carried out.

Marvin Sanderlin, who farms 1,700 acres of cotton, corn, and soybeans, was one of a delegation of 10 Tennessee farmers. He explained the greatest number of Black farmers reside in western Tennessee, and out of those, his county of Haywood has the most. He's waiting to hear about his claim, saying, "Most of the farmers I know have been turned down. None have been approved in Haywood county. The consent decree didn't say anything about debt relief, it's just another way to sweep all this under the rug."

When asked what he thought farmers needed to do to get justice, Sanderlin replied, "If I could, I would sit down with about 400 other farmers for six months and they would recognize the value of our farming."

Many farmers at the meeting made the point that what's needed is more united action to demand justice from the USDA. Jeff Hawkins, a livestock and vegetable farmer from North Carolina, said, "Lately we've been ending up in a lot of these places," referring to the march.

The farmers marched directly behind the contingent of Teamsters on strike at Overnite trucking. Jerry Wilson, with nine years at Overnite in Atlanta, said, "The union is real strong. I have faith in the union. If it wasn't for the union we wouldn't be as strong as we are today, just as if it wasn't for Martin Luther King, Jr., we wouldn't be as strong today."

Morale and a fighting spirit was high in the midst of this battalion of fighters. Allen Aultman, from Macon, Georgia, with eight years at Overnite, said, "If we get a contract with Overnite we will really be strong. Not only workers at Overnite, but workers around the country because many nonunion workers are interested in what is going on at Overnite."

Other political groups present at the march put forth their demands as well. Individual participants carried signs defending affirmative action. About 70 youthful supporters of Mumia Abu Jamal, a Black political activist who was framed-up by Philadelphia cops and is facing execution, formed a contingent.

Yemane Gebre, an airline mechanic at Northwest Airlines for four years and member of the Airline Mechanics Fraternal Association in Atlanta, said that he and a number of other Ethiopian nationals were marching to "protest the dictator Esayas Afeworki, president of Eritrea, and U.S. support for him." Gebre says the city's Ethiopian community numbers about 10,000.

Members of the Socialist Workers Party and Young Socialists marched with a banner saying, "Justice for Black Farmers, Support Overnite Strikers, Organize the South, For a Workers and Farmers Government." The banner was pictured prominently on the website of the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*



Photo from the January 18 *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* shows contingent of striking Overnite Teamsters in Atlanta Martin Luther King Day march. Also displayed prominently is the banner of the Young Socialists and the Socialist Workers Party.

in their coverage of the march the next day.

As the BFAA contingent marched chanting, "No farms, no food; no justice, no peace," the crowd would join in, often continuing the chant as the farmers caught their breath. Many were made aware of the farmers' fight for justice for the first time.

Tony Godfrey, a truck driver from Atlanta on strike at Overnite, said, "The pressure they're putting on people to work harder and

longer is killing people. But the working man is fighting back for a change. We won't be treated this way."

Godfrey added, "But unions are coming back and they're in for a fight. We can't stop until we come out on top. We need to stick to our guns and stay in until the end."

Rollande Girard in Miami contributed to this article.

Twin pickets say U.S. Navy out of Vieques

BY RON RICHARDS

CEIBA, Puerto Rico--More than 200 people joined picket lines here on January 16 calling for the U.S. Navy to get out of the island of Vieques, which it has used for live-fire training and as a military depot. A similar number picketed the entrances to Camp Garcia on Vieques, located about 15 miles across the water.

Both groups had planned to picket on Vieques but bad weather prevented activists from taking a boat across the water. Vieques is only six miles from Puerto Rico but both sides are controlled by the Navy, making the ferry crossing 16 miles. For decades the Navy has turned down requests to allow a shorter route, which would decrease the isolation of people on the island.

The same day as the twin marches, *El Nuevo Dia*, the largest daily in Puerto Rico, had several articles about the struggle to remove the Navy from Vieques. It reported that the Clinton administration is moving ahead with its plan to reopen the bombing range in March for five more years, but without any guarantees the Navy will leave then. All political parties and organizations in Puerto Rico have rejected the plan.

On this issue the military has bipartisan support. "There are ways that the Navy can improve its relations with the citizens of Vieques," said Trent Lott, Republican senator from Mississippi, "and I support these efforts. But I believe that training camp on Vieques must remain open to assure that our troops receive the training in live ammunition that they need."

In another article, *El Nuevo Dia* reports that half a world away people are following the news from Vieques with interest.

Okinawa, an island 300 miles off the southern coast of Japan, is loaded with U.S. military bases. Residents there have protested the U.S. military presence, especially after several U.S. sailors raped a 12-year-old girl in 1996. The Navy is worried that if Puerto Ricans succeed in kicking them out of Vieques that it will inspire a renewed fight in Okinawa.

Decatur rally protests school expulsions

Continued from front page

with their class this year, and all of the students are now attending alternative schools, which was not an option originally.

The students, along with their working mothers, occupied the front row of the church at Saturday's rally. Rainbow/PUSH leader and Democratic Party politician Rev. Jesse Jackson was the keynote speaker. In his hour-long speech, Jackson talked about King, the students' case, the disproportionate number of Blacks being expelled from schools, and high rates of incarceration of African-Americans.

During the three-day federal trial in December, testimony revealed that 47 of 57 students expelled from Decatur high schools in the last four years are African-American. Jackson said in his speech that Blacks make up 12 percent of the population of the United States and 55 percent of the prison population. Jackson promised to continue the fight, calling the school board's actions "excessive, arbitrary, racial, and unfair."

A lively audience, mostly Black, responded many times by jumping to their feet with extended applause in support of the

Correction

The article entitled "Workers strike Quebec radio and TV station," which appeared in the January 24, 2000, *Militant*, should have stated that the strike began December 30, but the picketing began January 3. In addition, workers at this plant received a wage increase of 3 percent over the past eight years, not 8 percent.

students. The audience also responded when Jackson pointed to the disparity in the number of Blacks in city and public school district jobs. He called for the jobs to be distributed more fairly.

John Slaughter, a retired electrician wearing his IBEW Local 146 union jacket, said he attended the rally because Jackson "marched with us and lots of other working people here" around the Staley fight. In the early 1990s locked-out workers at A.E. Staley, United Auto Workers union members on strike against Caterpillar, and other fighters linked up in support of each others struggles. Several large labor actions were held in Decatur at the time. A report to a local southern Illinois NAACP chapter on the rally yielded some discussion. Mona Crim commented, "You can see what their priorities are—putting all this money into prisons and not into schools. It's just another way to enslave a group of people."

Rainbow/PUSH has called for a rally for January 24 in the state capital, Springfield, followed the next day by a national conference on the "crisis of expelling and jailing our youth away."

Miners in Australia resist union busting

Continued from front page
offices on December 10 and set up picket lines several days later in Port Hedland during a 24-hour protest strike.

The bosses gave some 200 workers who have already signed individual contracts a day off rather than force them to cross the picket line.

Trevor Smith, who has worked in Port Hedland for 20 years, said, "If they get away with it here, they are going to get away with it at every other BHP site in Australia."

Daniel Connors, a mine worker with 21 years' experience at BHP in Port Hedland, said that those who have been tempted by the contracts will lose the protection of collective bargaining. "Blokes don't realize that once you sign, the union can't do anything for you," he said.

A campaign of 24-hour solidarity strikes by 10,000 steelworkers across the country began in December.

In Newcastle, north of here, 1,500 BHP steelworkers walked off the job for 24 hours December 20. Two days later another 1,500 workers at the company's Whyalla steelworks in South Australia struck for 24 hours. Other actions by BHP workers took place in Victoria.

At BHP's Port Kembla mill, 5,000 steel-

workers walked off the job January 13, and another 24-hour stoppage was organized at the Westernport mill in Victoria January 16.

CFMEU Southwestern District delegates, from predominantly BHP-owned mines on the south coast of New South Wales, also met to discuss solidarity with the Pilbara miners.

BHP is threatening to start offering individual nonunion contracts in its steel division if industrial action continues. The company stopped negotiating with the unions at all its 150 mines and other operations last November.

On January 10, BHP applied for and got orders from both the New South Wales and Australian Industrial Relations Commission to prevent strike action in support of the Pilbara miners. BHP's transport division also applied for a ban on planned action by members of the Maritime Union of Australia in New South Wales and Victoria.

Unions defied the rulings and workers walked off the job at both BHP's Port Kembla steelworks January 13 and the Rooty Hill mini mill in Sydney January 14.

Iron ore workers held stop-work meetings at Mount Newman and Port Hedland January 13 and voted in favor of a four-day stoppage across BHP's iron ore mines and other

plants beginning on January 19.

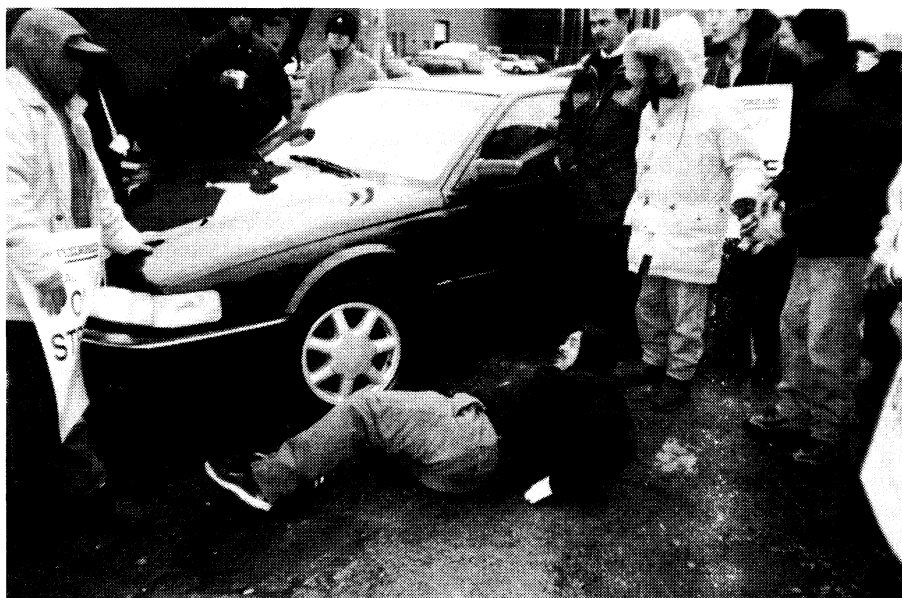
Workers at the Yallourn Energy plant went on strike, threatening power outages in the state of Victoria. Construction workers and baggage handlers also hit the streets in the state.

Union-minded workers across the coun-

try have their eyes on both BHP's union-busting probe and the defiant response by thousands of BHP unionists.

Linda Harris is a member of the Textile, Clothing and Footwear Union of Australia.

Boss runs over striking steelworker



United Steelworkers of America (USWA) striker Edgar Chete after being run over by a car driven by Mirolin company president. USWA Local 13571 set up picket lines at the company in Toronto December 13 after workers voted 93 percent to strike. Nearly 300 workers are demanding a 9.5 percent pay raise and other improvements in their contract. Chete, a machine operator who was active in the initial union organizing campaign, suffered a fractured bone in his foot but is back doing picket duty using a cane. The boss was not charged by the police. The photo was provided by another striking USWA member.

UMWA sues gov't, tries to push black lung protections

BY JAMES VINCENT

PITTSBURGH—In an attempt to force the government to take action against black lung, the United Mineworkers of America (UMWA) filed a lawsuit January 13 against U.S. Labor Secretary Alexis Herman and J. Davitt McAteer, assistant secretary of labor in charge of the U.S. Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA).

The miners' union is demanding that a federal court "force the U.S. Department of Labor to issue emergency rules to implement a government-run dust sampling program in mines across the country," according to a news report in the *Charleston Gazette*.

Black lung is a preventable lung disease

caused by breathing coal dust. Despite federal legislation enacted to prevent the disease, it still remains the number one killer of coal miners in the country.

In response to mass street protests and strikes by thousands of UMWA coal miners, Congress passed the federal Coal Mine Health and Safety Act in 1969. Since that time, the union has waged a seesaw battle against the coal bosses and U.S. government over deteriorating working conditions in the mines and continued foot-dragging, and denial of black lung compensation to coal miners and their families.

One aspect of MSHA's responsibilities is dust control. The government agency has

come under sharp criticism for failing to enforce the 1969 act. The law also has serious pitfalls because it made the coal bosses responsible for taking dust samples.

As a rule, the coal bosses rarely reported excessive dust levels. For at least a decade, this has been exposed as a total fraud.

In 1991, under the Bush administration, then U.S. Labor Secretary Lynn Martin "accused mine operators of 'widespread cheating' on their samples," reported the *Gazette*.

In suing the government, the union's lawyers argue that MSHA has ignored two reports that recommended that MSHA take full responsibility for all coal dust sampling. For example, the 1996 Labor Department's Advisory Committee to Eliminate Pneumoconiosis Among Coal Mine Workers issued a report with the conclusion that MSHA take over all dust samples. However, since then the federal agency has been sitting on its hands.

The UMWA's lawyers said, "To date, the secretary of labor has failed to promulgate regulations for MSHA to assume full re-

sponsibility for respirable coal dust compliance sampling, to require continuous monitoring for respirable coal dust, to ensure that miners have full rights to participate in the dust sampling program, and to ensure that dust sampling contemplates miners' full exposure."

McAteer, who defended the government's track record, said he was "disappointed" that the UMWA is taking the government to court. "Unfortunately, the method of developing regulations in today's government is a slow and difficult process," he said.

In response, UMWA president Cecil Roberts said in a statement, "It is about time the federal government heeds the long-standing advice of miners and implements regulations needed to help end this black plague that kills almost 1,500 miners each year."

In related news, 34 coal miners were killed in fatal accidents in 1999, a 7 percent increase over 1998 when 29 coal miners were killed. In Kentucky and West Virginia each had nine deaths, the highest number of any state.

Cape Breton miners end strike

BY JOE YOUNG

MONTREAL—After nearly two weeks on strike, coal miners in Cape Breton, Nova Scotia, voted to end their wildcat strike against Devco, a government-owned corporation.

Federal government officials agreed to form a committee that will discuss improvements in the \$111 million severance and retirement package it previously offered as part of closing down the mines. The package would have given severance pay to 650 miners and pensions to another 340. But because of the pension formula, most miners, and virtually all those under 50, would lose out on the \$22,000 annual pension despite more than 20 years on the job.

Miners who are members of the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA), along with workers who are members of the four unions involved, held a vote together at a Glace Bay hall. Others voted on the picket lines and in the depths of the Prince mine, where an occupation was occurring. Eighty-three percent voted to end the walkout.

The Prince mine is the last operating coal mine in Cape Breton. Devco closed down the Phalen mine last month. The union is demanding a program for union members to work until they qualify for pensions. "Our people would like to work until they can retire with dignity," Steve Drake, local president of the UMWA, said to reporters in Glace Bay.

A dozen or so strikers who had been occupying the Prince mine since January 9 returned to the surface and were embraced by family members and miners. "They're heroes," said Robert, a miner who would only give his first name. The miners occupied the mine to protect it from an early closure that would render the mine unworkable.

The strikers defied court injunctions to continue their strike. They blocked coal going to two Nova Scotia Power stations at Langan and Point Aconi. The two stations generate 785 megawatts of electricity a week, about half of the province's electrical

supply. Power interruptions would have occurred within two weeks.

About 50 Royal Canadian Mounted Police arrived in Sydney to join 135 officers brought there earlier in the week. They were prepared to enforce a Nova Scotia Supreme Court injunction if the strike continued.

Joe Young is a member of United Food and Commercial Workers Local 501 at St. Blaise-sur-Richelieu.

UMWA opposes closures of Pennsylvania mines

BY SALM KOLIS

INDIANA, Pennsylvania—Fifty people attended an emergency meeting of state legislators here January 5 to discuss how to respond to the closing of Consol Energy Inc. mines in Indiana and Armstrong counties.

Some 855 coal miners were laid off as a result of the closings. The company contends that economically minable reserves had been depleted. Coal from the Helvetia complex was being sold to the nearby Homer City electrical generation plant and the Keystone complex provided coal to the Keystone generating station. Coal will now be provided for these power stations from other Consol mines in southwestern Pennsylvania.

Attending the meeting were members of the Southwest Pennsylvania Legislative Coal Caucus, members of the boards of commissioners of Armstrong and Indiana counties, and members and officials of the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA).

The ripple effect of these layoffs is just beginning to be felt, as the closings affect related industries and businesses in the area. "You talk about the effect of the layoffs on the local communities, well I coach Little League Baseball, and last year we had 109 kids try out for seven teams. This year only 44 tried out. That's people leaving because of layoffs," commented Tony Reid who worked at the Marshall Run mine.

In his statement to the meeting, UMWA District 2 president Edward Yankovich said that for every mining job eliminated three to four other jobs related to mining will be lost. In December, RAG Emerald Resources Corporation in Greene County announced a layoff of 53 miners, citing poor market conditions. Prior to the job cuts, Emerald employed 533 underground miners, represented by UMWA Local 2258.

"The issue for us is jobs and economic well being of our communities. Their issues are profits regardless where they are generated or by whom," said Yankovich. The union official asked for money to be used to preserve good-paying jobs in the coalfields.

"There is a moral obligation to save these jobs.... This is an entire community we are talking about."

The union is seeking government help in creating an attractive financial package to attract a buyer for the shuttered five-mine complex, which has an estimated 500 million tons of reserves.

"Coal miners aren't stupid," said Tony Reid, who worked at the Marshall Run mine. "We know Consol buys out their competition and that's what they're doing here. They came here to buy the utilities contract. One of the Consol bosses at Marshall Run bragged that every mine he goes to is shut down within three years. Well, he shut us

down in 14 months."

Two months after Consol announced the closing of the Helvetia mines, the company announced it had signed a new contract with the Homer City Generating Station and would be providing the utility with coal from other Consol mines in Pennsylvania.

The union also called for an investigation into Consol's decision to close their mines in Indiana and Armstrong counties and the company's deal with Edison Mission Energy, which acquired the Homer City plant in March.

"I don't know if we can alter or change the course of capitalism," stated State Rep. Peter Daley, chairman of the legislative Coal Caucus. "I also don't think we can come up with \$100 million, but there is a good chance some money will be available."

Explaining the decision to close the mines for Consol, which was not invited to the emergency meeting, Thomas Hoffman explained that the mines weren't profitable under Rochester & Pittsburgh's stewardship, and that the company only made a prudent business decision in closing the Indiana county mines. Consol acquired the Keystone and Helvetia mining complexes a year ago when it bought the former Rochester & Pittsburgh Coal Co. Also acquired in that deal was the Eighty-Four mine in Washington county.

Russian forces push in Grozny

BY PATRICK O'NEILL

Smoke and flames arose from the Chechen capital of Grozny January 17 as Russian planes and artillery hurled explosives into its rubble. As Russian troops tried to push towards the city center, Russian Defense Ministry spokesperson Konstantin Kukhareenko claimed, "The decisive phase of the liberation of Grozny has started." Aslanbek Ismailov, the deputy chief of staff of the forces defending Grozny, said that fighting had stepped up dramatically, with clashes occurring in six separate districts. The Russian forces also stepped up their bombardment of the southern mountains, where Chechen independence fighters retain control.

The Russian command has thrown as many as 50,000 Russian troops into its brutal invasion of the territory, relying heavily on air power and artillery fire. The campaign began in September of last year. The generals met early success, as Moscow's forces overran most of the country's lowlands, especially in the northern areas. The casualty rate has climbed, however, as Moscow has attacked Grozny, where perhaps 2,000 Chechen fighters are firmly entrenched.

"We believe the number of soldiers and officers killed in the battlefield...is 3,000," said Valentina Melnikova of the Association of Soldiers' Mothers on January 16. Moscow admits to around a sixth of that number.

The Russian army's advantage in numbers and firepower is somewhat balanced by the experience and resilience of the Chechen snipers and infantry. The Chechen fighters also enjoy support among working people in the areas under dispute. "They just popped up among the civilians," said Maj. Gen. Sergei Madarov, the commander of the Eastern Group of Russian Forces in Chechnya, after his outfit recovered to beat back a January 9 Chechen attack in the town of Shali.

Independence forces attacked in the nearby town of Argun at the same time. Both towns are near Grozny. "We believed the elders that there were no bandits among them but they let us down," said Boris Maksin, chief of staff of the Interior Minis-

try troops.

After the clashes in Argun and Shali, Moscow ordered the detention and interrogation of all Chechen males between the ages of 10 and 60. This crackdown and the indiscriminate bombardment that has characterized the offensive give lie to the claim by president Vladimir Putin that "we regard the civilians in Chechnya as our citizens and we will not sacrifice them to achieve our military aims." Around 40,000 people remain in Grozny, "trapped in cold, dank cellars with little or no food," according to a Reuters report.

Heavy toll of invasion

Chechnya is paying a heavy price for the invasion. *New York Times* journalist Michael Gordon reported on January 17 that "most oil wells have stopped working and 12 wells have caught fire, burning 2,500 tons of oil a day. Six thousand people used to work in Chechnya's oil industry, but that work force has shrunk to 500...."

"Most of Chechnya's cattle, sheep and poultry have perished. Of 900,000 acres of farmland, only 67,000 have been ploughed and 21,000 sown with winter wheat," he continued.

"With tuberculosis and other diseases stalking Chechnya, medical care is a major worry. There were about 11,000 hospital beds in Chechnya in the early 1990s. Today there are only 2,200."

The U.S. rulers and the various imperialists in Europe have criticized the invasion, feigning concern for its humanitarian cost. These powers seek to humiliate and pressure Moscow.

"Working level" officials of the U.S. State Department met the foreign minister of the besieged Chechen government, Ilyas Akhmadov, on January 13. "These discussions do not constitute...recognition of Chechnya," said department spokesperson James Rubin.

"We are not asking for money or weapons," said Akhmadov. He said that 10,000 civilians have died in the conflict, and that the Chechen troops are able to buy weapons from Russian soldiers. Moscow greeted

his visit with alarm.

Columnist William Safire said in an opinion column, "The civilized world cannot allow the all-out war on the Chechen people to continue without consequences."

Washington cannot intervene militarily, he wrote, "because—as we were warned again last week—Russia is a nuclear power." He advised "heavier media attention and unrelenting diplomatic pressure."

The administration of President William Clinton accompanies its criticism of the Chechnya aggression with demands on Moscow to amend the 1972 Antiballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty. The treaty's provision would forbid the deployment of an antimissile system presently under development by the Pentagon.

Moscow resists U.S. pressure

If anything, Moscow's resistance to the changes is stiffening. "If ever the U.S. leaves the ABM treaty of 1972, the international situation will start to deteriorate," said Russian defense minister Marshal Igor Sergeyev on January 17, during a meeting with his Chinese counterpart, Chi Haotian.

"Attempts to make Taiwan join the creation and unveiling of a theater of war antiballistic missile system are a serious interference into China's internal affairs and will necessarily be seriously repulsed by the Chinese people," said Chi.

Three days earlier Moscow had released a new doctrine of national defense. "The level and scale of military threats is growing," states the document, referring to the U.S. imperialists. It authorizes the government to use all forces "including nuclear weapons" if other methods failed to repel an attack.

"The doctrine replaces one adopted in 1997, a time when political and military partnership with the West were still buzzwords and many Russians remained optimistic about the country's economic future," reported the Associated Press.

Sergei Sorkut, a military affairs writer at the *Nezavisimaya Gazeta* newspaper, which published the doctrine, commented that "the idea of partnership has vanished."

U.S. sergeant charged with murder in Kosova



Hamdi Shabiu, in Vitina, Yugoslavia, holds a picture of his murdered daughter, an 11-year-old from Kosova. Staff Sgt. Frank Ronghi, squad leader assigned to Company A, Third Battalion of the U.S. military's 504th Parachute Infantry from Fort Bragg, North Carolina, has been charged with sexually assaulting and killing the girl.

Local residents say they have filed numerous complaints with the U.S. command in Kosova about male soldiers searching young girls for weapons, sexually abusing them in the process. They had no response to their appeals.

"We don't want them here to give us security if they are going to do this," said Muharram Samakova, a neighbor of the slain girl's family. The name of the girl was not printed in the *New York Times* story of the atrocity.

Cubans mobilize for return of boy

BY GREG McCARTAN

In a massive show of solidarity, national dignity, and revolutionary determination, 100,000 Cuban women marched on the U.S. Interests Section in Havana January 14 to demand Washington return Elián González to his family there.

The demonstration received international coverage, with huge photographs in the media, especially Spanish-language newspapers. Stretching several miles according to the press reports, the action showed the resolve of the Cuban people in the face of U.S. government provocations.

Decisions by the Clinton administration this week mean the González boy's return has been postponed indefinitely.

White House chief of staff John Podesta said on the ABC news program "This Week" that "the best place for this to be decided is in a court of law." He was referring to the Justice Department's decision to not return González to Cuba, but to open the way for a



The front ranks of the 100,000-strong march of women in Havana on January 17

federal court hearing on his custody.

This is the best course, the White House spokesman said, "rather than the halls of Congress. But, you know, we'll have to wait and see what they propose and take that on when they get back to town." Sen. Connie Mack of Florida and four congresspeople have proposed granting González U.S. citizenship, an action supported by Senate majority leader Trent Lott.

Ricardo Alarcón, president of the National Assembly of Cuba, said on NBC's "Meet the Press" that citizenship "should not be used for that kind of maneuvering." Later, on "Fox News Sunday," he added, "Congress is supposed to be a serious institution and not an instrument to permit what amounts to a kid-

napping of a small boy."

As has been the aim all along, the refusal to return the boy to his father simply gives more time for anti-Cuba slanders to be ground out every day.

U.S. senator and Republican Party presidential hopeful John McCain said he favored citizenship for the boy, since "his mother made the ultimate sacrifice in order that he might breathe free."

The boy's mother drowned when the boat in which she was traveling from Cuba sank. She was trying to enter the United States illegally under U.S. statutes that encourage such risky attempts. The law says anyone who lands on U.S. shores is granted U.S. residency within a year. There has been no evidence presented to back up McCain's assertion.

Washington sets up North American military command for inside the U.S.

BY GREG McCARTAN

The Clinton administration has begun to set up a military command for inside the United States. Operations for the Joint Task Force Civil Support have been established in the Joint Forces Command, which supervises more than half of the U.S. military.

Brig. Gen. Bruce Lawlor is in charge of the unit. He is third in the chain of command from the president. According to reports in the big business media, Lawlor was chosen to appease civil rights concerns posed by giving the military the formal go-ahead for domestic operations, which would include secret police and other branches of the armed forces. "He can talk to civilians," said John Hamre, deputy secretary of defense.

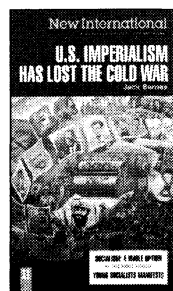
U.S. defense secretary William Cohen said that openly using a name such as the "homeland defense command" and formally appointing a commander in chief for operations inside the United States may have been

"premature." But, he added, "Who are you going to turn to when there is a catastrophic event?"

A *New York Times* article entitled, "Military Terrorism Operation Has a Civilian Focus," said that the military operations "would bring order to the expected chaos and panic that would follow a terrorist attack."

Clinton also proposed an additional \$280 million on computer security to fight "cyberterrorism," according to the *Wall Street Journal*. The "education president" said most of the funds would go for college scholarships for students who agree to work for the government as computer security specialists.

The head of the National Security Council's counterterrorism unit, Richard Clarke, said the additional funds are needed because several unnamed "foreign governments are believed to have developed 'offensive information warfare units,'" the *Journal* reported.



In New International no. 11

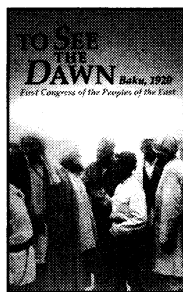
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Youth must march in the vanguard

Che Guevara discusses revolutionary politics and working-class leadership

At the end of January, Pathfinder will publish *Che Guevara Talks to Young People*, together with the Spanish-language version, *Che Guevara habla a la juventud*. This book, a collection of eight speeches by the Argentine-born revolutionary who helped lead the first socialist revolution of the Americas in Cuba, was prepared with the help of Editora Abril, the publishing house of the Union of Young Communists in Cuba.

In these speeches Guevara challenges youth to work. To become disciplined. To fearlessly join the vanguard on the front lines of struggles, small and large. To read and to study. To aspire to be revolutionary combatants. To politicize the organizations and institutions they are part of and in the process politicize themselves. To become a different kind of human being as they strive together with working people of all lands to transform the world. And, along this line of march, to renew and revel in the spontaneity and joy of being young.

The Union of Young Communists (UJC) was a creation of the Cuban revolution. Initially called the Association of Rebel Youth (AJR), it was created by the Rebel Army Department of Instruction, headed by Guevara, in December 1959. In October 1960 the AJR fused with other revolutionary-minded youth groups, thus bringing together within its ranks young people from three organizations: the July 26 Movement; the youth wing of the Popular Socialist Party; and the March 13 Revolutionary Directorate. In April 1962 the AJR adopted the name Union of Young Communists.

The speech that follows was given May 9, 1964 to a seminar held over six days on "Youth and the Revolution" sponsored by UJC members working in the Ministry of Industry. The closing session was addressed by Guevara, who had headed the ministry since its creation in February 1961.

When the Ministry of Industry was formed, it was given authority over 287 enterprises with some 150,000 workers. Under Guevara's leadership, the ministry set about creating an integrated and centralized national structure of industrial enterprises, giving the working class greater leverage in determining economic and social priorities. Through this effort, the revolutionary government confronted many key challenges in leading the transition to socialism.

In organizing the planning and management of Cuban industry, Guevara emphasized that advances in the productivity of labor depended, first and foremost, on the transformation of the political consciousness of the working class as the toilers carried out the revolutionary task of building socialism. As workers developed their technical and administrative skills and also organized

volunteer work brigades to meet pressing social needs, they would develop new, communist attitudes toward work. "We can undertake the task of creating a new consciousness because we have new forms of relations of production," Guevara wrote in February 1964, a few months prior to the seminar. Cuba's legacy of imperialist-imposed economic backwardness did not bar this course, he insisted. "The development of consciousness can advance ahead of the state of the productive forces in any given country" once the means of production belong to society, no longer to individual owners. The goal is that "man-as-commodity"

ing you some of my opinions, because I have often had a critical attitude toward the youth—not as youth per se but as an organization. In general, however, my critical approach has not been backed by suggestions for practical solutions to the problem. In other words, my role has been something like a sniper, a role not in keeping with other responsibilities I have, including as a member of the leadership, of the party secretariat, and so forth. There have been conceptual questions over the character of a youth organization that we have never totally agreed on. We have always thought that the youth, as an organization, had somewhat of a me-

nal than the other. In fact, these concepts come from analyzing the deep problems that have occurred inside the socialist camp—from the very moment the first socialist revolution triumphed, from the October Revolution of 1917 up to the present.

These concepts must be analyzed and studied in depth, particularly in light of the specific features of our revolution. This revolution began as a mass movement supporting an insurrectional struggle, without the formation of an organic party of the proletariat. It later merged with the party representing the proletariat, the Popular Socialist Party, which to that time had not been leading the struggle.

Owing to these characteristics, our movement is fully impregnated by the petty bourgeoisie, both on the individual level and politically. In the course of the struggle and the revolution, each of us kept evolving, since the majority of the revolution's leaders, in terms of their class background, come from the petty bourgeoisie, and some even from the bourgeoisie.

This kind of baggage gets dragged along for quite a period of time; it cannot just be cut out of the minds of men overnight. This was so even when the socialist character of the revolution was declared—it was a declaration after the fact; there already was a socialist revolution because we had wrested the majority of the key means of production. But politically we were not moving forward evenly in step with all the advances the revolution was making on the economic level and in certain ideological areas.

This characteristic of our revolution means we have to be very cautious in characterizing our party as the leader of the working class as a whole, and above all with regard to its concrete relations with each of the different administrative bodies, the army, the security apparatus, and so on.

Our party does not yet have statutes. Our party still is not even completely formed. So the question is: Why don't we have statutes? There is plenty of experience; that is to say, experience that goes back almost



Che Guevara addressing seminar on Youth and the Revolution organized by the Union of Young Communists in the Ministry of Industry, May 9, 1964.

cease to exist, Guevara explained in "Socialism and Man in Cuba" in early 1965. In the transition to socialism, man "starts to see himself reflected in his work and to understand his full stature as a human being through the object created, through the work accomplished. Work no longer entails surrendering a part of his being in the form of labor power sold, which no longer belongs to him, but represents an expression and extension of himself, a contribution to the common social existence in which he is reflected."

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Compañeros:

Some time ago, I was invited by the youth organization to give closing remarks to a series of presentations and discussions through which the organization was showing clear signs of life within the framework of the political work of the Ministry.

I was interested in talking with you, giv-

ing you some of my opinions, because I have often had a critical attitude toward the youth—not as youth per se but as an organization. In general, however, my critical approach has not been backed by suggestions for practical solutions to the problem.

The youth organization was in fact born under our direct guidance, in its first embryonic form, when the Association of Rebel Youth was formed, subordinate to the Rebel

'The goal is that man as a commodity cease to exist . . . that he begins to see himself reflected in his work and to understand his full stature as a human being . . .'

Army's Department of Instruction. Later on it separated off, acquiring its own political characteristics.

Although I held a critical attitude toward the youth, this attitude was not always accompanied by proposals for systematic and concrete work. This is a very complex problem because it relates to everything that involves the party's organization. From a theoretical point of view—and not just with regard to the youth—we have a series of concerns we still have not been able to fully resolve. What is the role of the party? I'm not talking about its role in abstract, general terms, with which we are all familiar. But what should the party's approach be in each of the various fronts where it has to function? To what degree does it participate in public administration? What should be its degree of responsibility? What should be the relationship, for example, between the various levels of public administration and the party?

These are problems that have not been set down in rules, and that we are all familiar with. They are problems that create frictions at various levels. Take the National Directorate [of the party] and the Council of Ministers—here the interdependence of the two bodies is clear, and often the individuals involved are the same. Beyond this, each of these bodies functions independently. Certain work habits are created in each, concepts that clash in real life, and for which we have yet to find practical solutions. Obviously, this also has to do with the fact that there are different conceptual approaches at work, none of which has been able to prove itself more efficient and ratio-

fifty years. So what is going on? The answer is that there are certain questions about this experience that we are still trying to come to grips with, questions to which you cannot just give a spontaneous or superficial answer, because they have extremely important implications for the revolution's future.

In Cuba the ideology of the old ruling classes maintains its presence through the consciousness of individuals, as I indicated earlier. In addition, it remains present because it is constantly being exported from the United States—the organizing center of world reaction—which physically exports saboteurs, bandits, propagandists of all sorts, and whose constant broadcasts reach the entire national territory with the exception of Havana.

In other words, the Cuban people come in permanent contact with imperialist ideology. This is then repackaged here in Cuba by propaganda outfits scientifically organized with the goal of projecting the dark side of our system, which necessarily has dark sides because we are in a transitional period and because those of us who have led the revolution up to now were not professional economists and politicians with a lot of experience, backed by an entire staff.

At the same time, they promote the most dazzling and fetishistic features of capitalism. This is all introduced into the country, and sometimes it finds an echo in the subconscious of many people. It awakens latent feelings that had barely been touched owing to the speed of the process, to the huge number of emotional salvos we have had to fire to defend our revolution—where

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"We are attacked a great deal because of what we are. But we are attacked much, much more because we show to every nation of the Americas what it's possible to be. What's important for imperialism—much more than Cuba's nickel mines or sugar mills, or Venezuela's oil, or Mexico's cotton, or Chile's copper, or Argentina's cattle, or Paraguay's grasslands, or Brazil's coffee—is the totality of these raw materials upon which the monopolies feed."

—Che Guevara, July 28, 1960
(from *Che Guevara Talks to Young People*)

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the word "revolution" has merged with the word "homeland," has merged with defense of every single one of our interests. These are the most sacred of all things for every individual, regardless of class background.

In face of the threat of thermonuclear aggression, as in October [1962], the people came together automatically.¹ Many who had never even done guard duty in the militias showed up to fight. Everyone was transformed in the face of this clear injustice. Everyone wanted to demonstrate their determination to fight for their homeland. This was also a decision by people faced with a danger from which they could not possibly escape by remaining neutral, since neither embassies nor anything else will be considered neutral by an atomic bomb; everything is annihilated.

That is how we have been advancing, by leaps, uneven leaps, the way all revolutions advance, deepening our ideology in certain areas, learning even more, developing schools of Marxism.

At the same time, we constantly worry about coming to positions that could stop the revolution's progress and introduce through the back door petty-bourgeois concepts or imperialist ideology by way of these critical attitudes about the party's tasks throughout the state apparatus. That is why the party is not yet properly organized today. That is why we have not yet achieved the necessary degree of institutionalization at the top levels of the state.

But we are also trying to address several other questions. We need to create something new, which we feel should precisely reflect the relationships that should exist between the masses and those in positions of power, both directly and through the party. We have made various trial runs along these lines: pilot projects of various types of local administration—one in El Cano, a different one in Güines, yet another in Matanzas.

of the revolution and above all for the development of centralized planning.

The work of the youth was conducted within the context of this vast sea of ideological struggles among distinct supporters of different ideas, even if there were no defined tendencies or currents. The youth organization began functioning first as an outgrowth of the Rebel Army; later it acquired greater ideological depth, and then it transformed itself into the Union of Young Communists, which we could call the antechamber to party membership, which necessarily implies the obligation of acquiring a higher level of political education.

Faced with these problems, there was no real discussion, although some discussions were held on the role of the youth organization, from a practical standpoint. Should the youth organization meet for three, four, or five hours to discuss profound philosophical questions? They can do so—one is saying this is forbidden. But it is simply a question of balance and of one's attitude to the revolution, to the party, and above all to the people. The fact that the youth are taking up questions of theory shows they have already achieved a certain theoretical depth. But if all they are doing is grappling with theoretical questions, it means the youth have not been able to get beyond a mechanical approach, and are confused about their goals.

There has also been talk about how youth are by definition spontaneous, joyful. So the youth—and I'm talking in general, not about the particular group in the ministry



still unexplored, a trail on which no one has taken a single step.

So the youth still need to take up the big tasks the government set forward, take them up as tasks before the masses, turn them into their own aspirations, and march along this road as the vanguard. Led and guided by the party, the youth must march in the vanguard.

The first qualitative change in our party occurred when all the bad leadership methods were abandoned, and exemplary workers, vanguard workers—those workers on the production front who could really speak



Top photo: Juventud Rebelde/Morejón, Above: Granma
Top, members of the Union of Young Communists join volunteer work brigade to pick coffee, October 1993. Voluntary work, Guevara explained, is an important step in transforming work from the compulsory obligation it is under capitalism into the social necessity it will become in communist society. Below, Militia members prepare to defend revolution during October 1962 "missile crisis." Cuba's workers and peasants, Guevara said, "were transformed in the face of this clear injustice" by Washington.

the most difficult problems to resolve when presented for theoretical discussion. Because, simply put, this is what it means to be a Young Communist. You shouldn't think about how to be one, it has to come from

with authority and who were also the ones going to the front lines—were elected to membership.² Although this was not the only change, and had to be followed up by a whole series of organizational measures,



Liborio Noval

Havana "rally of the pencils" celebrates successful conclusion of year-long literacy campaign, Dec. 22, 1961. Some 100,000 young people fanned out across Cuba to teach nearly a million peasants and workers to read and write, virtually eliminating illiteracy. "Youth need to take up the big tasks before the masses," Guevara said, "turn them into their own, and march along this road as the vanguard."

Through these trial runs we are constantly observing the advantages and disadvantages of all these different systems—which contain within them the germ of a higher type of organization—for the development

here—have organized joyfulness. Then young leaders set about thinking, what is it youth should be doing, since, by definition, it's supposed to be merry and fun. Precisely this was turning youth into old people. Why should a young person have to sit down and think about what youth should be?

They should simply do what comes to mind, and that, in fact, will be what youth do. But this wasn't what happened, since there was a whole group of youth leaders who had truly grown old. That's when this joy, this youthful spontaneity is turned into superficiality. So we have to be careful.

We should not confuse the happiness, the freshness, the spontaneity of youth all over the world—and especially Cuban youth, because of the nature of the Cuban people—with superficiality. These are two absolutely different things. It's possible and necessary to be spontaneous and gay, but one has to be serious at the same time. So this is one of

within.

I don't know if I'm getting into deep, semiphilosophical waters, but this is one of the problems we have discussed the most. The main way the youth must show the way forward is precisely through being the vanguard in each of the areas of work they participate in.

This is why we have often had certain little problems with the youth: that they weren't cutting all the sugarcane they should, that they weren't doing as much voluntary labor as they should. In short, it is impossible to lead with theories alone; and much less can there be an army composed only of generals. An army can have one general, maybe several generals and one commander in chief if it is very large. But if there's no one to go into the battlefield, there's no army. And if the army in the field isn't being led by those who have gone into the field themselves, who've gone to the front, then such an army is no good. One of the attributes of our Rebel Army was that the men promoted to lieutenant, captain, or commander—the only three ranks we had in the Rebel Army—were those whose personal qualities had distinguished them on the field of battle.

The first two ranks—the lieutenants and captains—were the ones who directed combat operations. So that is what we need—lieutenants and captains, or whatever you want to call them. You can take away the military titles if you want—but the person leading must do so by setting the example. To follow or to make oneself be followed can be a difficult task at times. But it's much, much easier than forcing others to do the walking, making them proceed along a trail

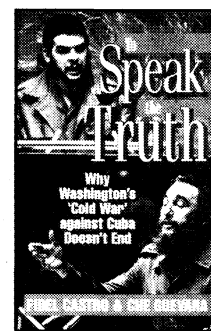
it marks the most important aspect of our transformation. There have also been a series of changes in the youth.

I want to emphasize one point—something I have emphasized continuously: stay
Continued on Page 10

2. As part of the reorganization of the Integrated Revolutionary Organizations (ORI) into the United Party of the Socialist Revolution (PURS) in 1962-63, a procedure was established whereby workers were nominated for party membership by their fellow workers at assemblies in their workplace. That procedure continues today in the Communist Party of Cuba.

To Speak the Truth

Why
Washington's
'Cold War'
against Cuba
Doesn't End
Fidel Castro
and Che
Guevara



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1. A reference to the October 1962 "Missile" Crisis. In the face of escalating preparations by Washington for an invasion of Cuba in the spring and summer of 1962, the Cuban government signed a mutual defense agreement with the Soviet Union. In October 1962 U.S. president John Kennedy demanded removal of Soviet nuclear missiles installed in Cuba following the signing of the pact. Washington ordered a naval blockade of Cuba, stepped up its preparations to invade, and placed U.S. armed forces on nuclear alert. Cuban workers and farmers mobilized in the millions to defend the revolution. Following an exchange of communications between Washington and Moscow, on October 28 Soviet premier Nikita Khrushchev, without consulting the Cuban government, announced his decision to remove the missiles.

Youth must march in the vanguard

continued from Page 9

young, don't transform yourselves into old theoreticians, or theorizers, maintain the freshness and enthusiasm of youth. You must learn to grab hold of the great watchwords of the government, internalize them, and become the motor force of the whole mass movement, marching in the vanguard. To do this, you have to learn how to discern the most important aspect of things being stressed by the government, which represents the people and is, at the same time, a party.

Similarly, one must know how to weigh things and set priorities. These are tasks the youth organization must carry out.

You have been talking about the technological revolution. This is one of the most important things, one of the most concrete tasks and one that is closest to the mentality of youth. But one cannot seek to carry out a technological revolution by oneself, because the technological revolution is happening all over the world, in every country, both socialist and nonsocialist—I am referring to the advanced countries, of course.

There is a technological revolution going on in the United States. There's a powerful technological revolution in France, in Britain, in the Federal Republic of Germany, and these are certainly not socialist countries. So the technological revolution must have a class content, a socialist content. And for this to happen, there must be a transformation of the youth so that they become a genuine motor force. In other words, all the bad habits of the old, dead society must be eliminated. One cannot think about a technological revolution without at the same time thinking about a communist attitude toward work. This is extremely important. We cannot speak of a socialist technological revolution if there is not a communist attitude toward work.

This is simply the reflection in Cuba of the technological revolution taking place as a result of the most recent scientific inventions and discoveries. These are things that cannot be separated. And a communist attitude toward work consists of changes taking place in an individual's consciousness, changes that naturally take a long time. We cannot expect that changes of this sort will be completed within a short period, during which work will continue to have the character it has now—a compulsory social obligation—before being transformed into a social necessity. In other words, this transformation—the technological revolution—presents the opportunity to get closer to what interests you most in life, your work, your research, your studies of every type. And one's attitude toward this work will be something totally new. Work will be what Sunday is now—not the Sunday when you cut cane, but the Sunday when you don't cut cane. In other words, work will be seen as a necessity, not something compelled by sanctions.

But achieving that requires a long process, a process tied to the creation of habits acquired through voluntary work. Why do we emphasize voluntary work so much? Economically it means practically nothing. Even the volunteers who cut cane—which is the most important task from an economic point of view—don't accomplish much. A volunteer cutter from this ministry cuts only a fourth or a fifth of what a cane cutter who has been doing this his whole life does. It has economic importance today because of the shortage of labor. It is also important today because these individuals are giving a part of their lives to society without expecting anything in return, without expecting any kind of payment, simply fulfilling



Left photo: Juvetud Rebelde
Top, during the early 1960s the Cuban revolution was part of a rising wave of anti-imperialist struggles. Vietnamese youth demonstrate. Banner reads, "Chi Lang village youth volunteer in anti-U.S. war of national salvation." Sign at left says, "Nothing is more precious than independence and freedom." Left, Cuban women's anti-aircraft artillery unit in Angola, 1988. Since the revolution's earliest years, Cuban internationalist volunteers have aided struggles of working people around the world. "In Cuba," Guevara said, "the word 'revolution' has merged with the defense of every single one of our interests."

transformed in conjunction with advances in production. We would not be doing our job if we were solely producers of commodities, of raw material, and were not at the same time producers of men.

Here is one of the tasks of the youth: to give impetus to, and to lead through example, the production of the man of tomorrow. In this production and leadership, the production of oneself is included, because nobody is perfect, far from it. Everyone needs to be improving themselves through work, through relations with other people, through serious study, critical discussions—these are all things that contribute to the

but I can't tell anyone to come here. What's going on? Either there is a lack of communication or a lack of interest, and this hasn't been overcome by the people in charge of doing so. This is a concrete task of the ministry. It is the task of the youth organization to overcome the indifference within the ministry. Of course, there is always room for self-criticism; and the assessment that not enough has been done to stay in constant communication with people is always appropriate.

'Here is one of the tasks of youth: to give impetus to, and to lead through example, the production of the man of tomorrow . . . the production of oneself included.'

That's true, but it's also important that self-criticism be complete: because self-criticism is not self-flagellation but rather an analysis of a person's attitude. Moreover, the enormous amount of work on one's shoulders, one task after another all piled up, makes it more difficult to have a different type of relationship and to pursue a more human relationship, one could say, a relationship less directed through bureaucratic red tape.

This will come in due time: when work is not so urgent, when there are a whole number of cadres to lean on, when all tasks are always fulfilled, when lack of confidence in work done is no longer one of the disgraceful features of this entire stage of our revolution.

Today, it is necessary to check documents personally, double-check statistics personally, and errors are often still found. So once this stage has disappeared—and it is on the road to disappearing; it will soon disappear—when all the cadres are stronger, when each of us has advanced a little more, then of course there will be time for different types of relations. Naturally this doesn't mean a minister or a director going around asking everybody how their families are doing. Rather, we will be able to organize relations that enable us to work better both within the ministry and outside it, so we get to know each other better.

The aim of socialism today, in this current stage of building socialism and communism, is not simply to create shiny factories. These factories are being built for human beings in their totality. Man must be

transformation of people. We know all this because five long years have passed since our revolution triumphed, and seven long years since the first of us landed and began the struggle, the final stage of the struggle. Whoever looks back and thinks about what he was like seven years ago will realize that we have traveled far, very far, but there is still a long way to go.

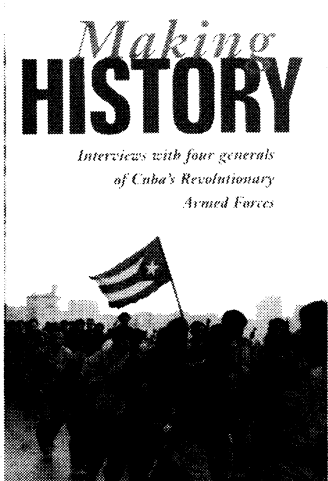
These are the tasks, and the most important thing is for the youth to understand their role and their fundamental task. They shouldn't inflate that role more than is merited. They should not consider themselves the center of the socialist universe. Rather, they should see themselves as an important link, a very important one that points toward the future.

We ourselves are already on the decline, even if geographically speaking we might still be situated among the youth. We have carried out many hard tasks, we have had the responsibility of leading a country through tremendously difficult times, and naturally all this ages us, it wears us out. Within a few years the task of those of us remaining will be to retire to winter quarters so that new generations can occupy our posts. In any case, I think we have played an important role, and have done so with a certain amount of dignity. But our job will not be complete unless we know the right time to step aside. And another task in front of you is to create the people who will replace us. That we can be forgotten as a thing of the past will become one of the most important gauges of the work carried out by the youth as a whole and by the entire people.

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Union tops and textile bosses target imports

Workers need to see Chinese counterparts as allies, not competitors

BY ANDY BUCHANAN

PATERSON, New Jersey—In the week before Christmas, more than 1,000 dye-house workers in the Paterson area returned to work after a successful four-day strike. The unionists, members of four locals of the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees (UNITE), work at 18 factories which dye, print, and finish cloth.

The owners of the dye-houses, grouped in two employer's associations, demanded workers take a 15 percent pay cut, give up three paid holidays, and accept cuts in medi-

sulted in cuts in wages and benefits, adding "So we've already helped the companies out.... We've already made the concessions."

Democratic Party congressman William Pascrell, a former mayor of Paterson, joined this united front of bosses and union officials for a rally outside Kalksteins Silk Mill on November 30. UNITE called the protest to demand an end to "unfair trade and sweatshops," and for "protecting our jobs," higher wages, and a "safe environment." It was timed to coincide with protest actions against the World Trade Organization conference in Seattle. Looms at the silk mill were idled for half an hour as managers encouraged workers to attend the rally. They joined other local bosses on the platform—including one from a nonunion shop notorious for long hours and low wages. All were sporting UNITE! union baseball caps.

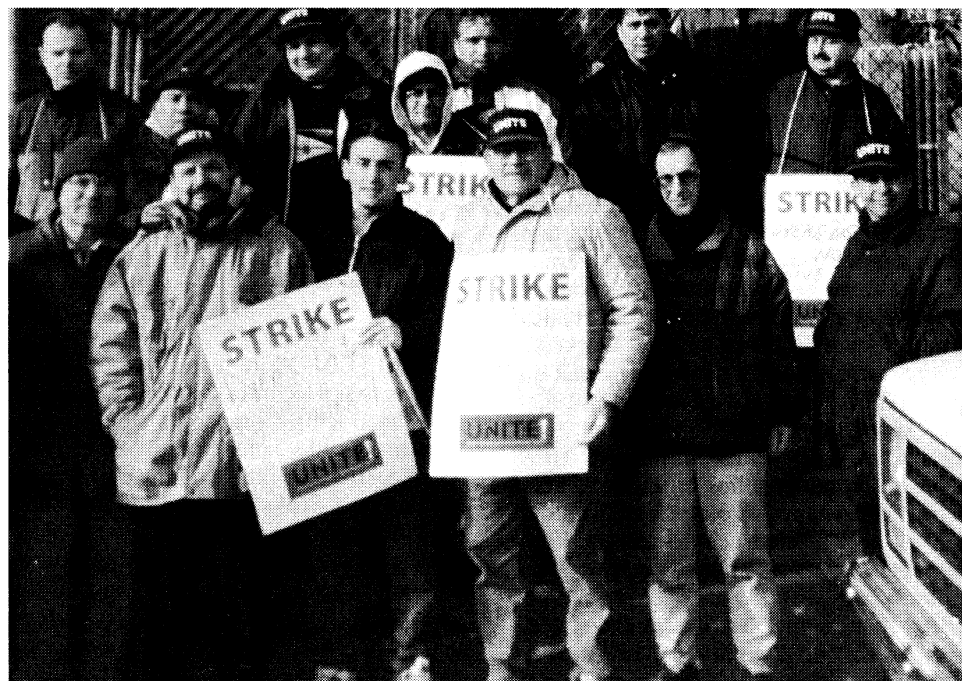
Pascrell sharpened the bellicose anti-China thrust of the brief speeches by bosses and union officials, pointing to the difficulty of competing with workers who labor for "three bowls of rice a day," saying that lost jobs in the United States were "blood on the barbed wire of trade war." Silk mill owner Theodore Lederman protested the import of finished silk cloth from China, while stressing the importance of continuing to ship in raw silk yarn from China and Korea, which is worked up in his mill.

It is particularly important for garment and textile workers to closely examine where the union officials are trying to lead us with their anti-China rhetoric and their attempts to get us to view workers abroad—and in other parts of the United States—as competitors. Competition among workers is something that benefits the bosses. It is the fundamental character of our existence as workers under capitalism: we are forced to compete with each other for jobs.

In times of high unemployment and social crisis, the employers are especially quick to utilize this fact. They tell us, sometimes outright, "You don't like the way things are? Someone else out there would be glad to have this job, for less!"

Unions are organizations that arise because of this conflict, whose initial purpose is to join workers together so the bosses can't pit one against the other. Ultimately, our unions need to address the interests of all the exploited and oppressed, and fight to overturn the wages system as a whole.

When the bosses and the union officials say, "We can't compete!" our answer can



Militant/Ned Measel

Striking UNITE members at New Jersey Trio Dye & Finishing plant, December 22. The four-day strike pushed back company takeback demands. Campaign by bosses and officials against imports weakens union.

be, "We, working people, don't want to compete. Let's join together in a common international revolutionary struggle!"

Targeting China aids the employers and their government in another way. Chinese workers and peasants in their tens of millions carried out a mighty social revolution in 1947-49. They not only overturned a century of colonial and imperialist plunder of the country, but expropriated capitalist companies, turned land over to peasants, and abolished a host of exploitative and oppressive laws and practices.

Today, the U.S. government is starting to prepare to win back China for exploitation by the wealthy American owners of banking and industry. That will take going to war with the people of China. Rather than aid those plans, we need to solidarize with the Chinese workers and peasants, learn about their revolution, and oppose Washington's long-term war plans.

The strike by dye-house workers offers a concrete alternative to the non-struggle and pro-company framework of the union officials. Workers start from the need to wage a militant fight right here and now *against* the employers and their attacks on wages, conditions on the job, and benefits. We need

to extend this to an international level and chart a course of revolutionary struggle against the government and their bosses, rather than helping them to prepare for war against working people in other countries.

Weaver and UNITE member Juan Guirales was active in visiting the dye-workers picket lines and in building support for the strike amongst his co-workers in the silk mill. He notes, "We saw a lot of solidarity and sympathy for this strike. Little by little working people are coming together—the dye house workers showed a strength that can be an example to other workers." Commenting on the outcome of the strike, Guirales added, "The gain from the strike was not really too much—and workers will have to do it again in three years time. But the union came out stronger."

While not exactly celebrating a measly 30-cent pay raise over three years, dye workers are proud that the concession demands were pushed back and the union strengthened. Strike notices and picket line photos adorn the walls in at least a couple of the factories.

Andy Buchanan is a member of UNITE in Paterson, New Jersey.

UNION TALK

cal benefits. Workers responded to these demands by organizing a militant strike. The bosses quickly agreed to a modest 30-cent pay raise over the contract's three years.

In this strike, many pickets said that they felt that the union is stronger than it was during a walkout in 1993, where workers were forced to accept deep concessions in order to get back to work. On the picket line at Continental Dye and Finishing, I met a worker who had been hired as a scab in 1993 and who was now pulling picket duty along with his co-workers.

The run-up to the strike overlapped with a heightened campaign by local bosses to blame foreign competition, particularly with China, for the problems the textile companies face in making the kind of profits the bosses require. Justifying the bosses' concessionary demands, Mark Kluger, an attorney for seven of the dye-houses, explained in the pages of the Paterson *Herald News*, "The foreign competition is hammering us. This trade agreement with China that has just been signed—their labor costs are not comparable to ours—they are far, far lower. We're not saying that we're trying to come up with the same labor costs as China. What we're saying is that this is the reality with which we must deal."

Union officials ride the same protectionist bandwagon. Luis Ginorio, the head of the Dyers District of UNITE, is quoted in the same article as saying, "NAFTA has had a big impact on us. But the new trade agreement will have an even worse impact. We can't compete with China. Or with North Carolina or South Carolina, for that matter." Ginorio pointed out that the 1993 strike re-

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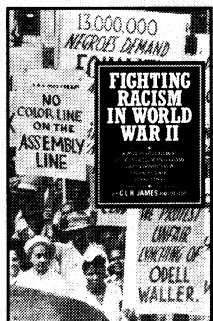
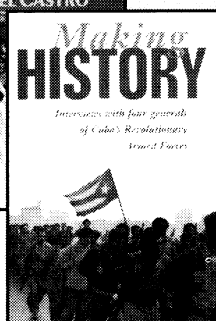
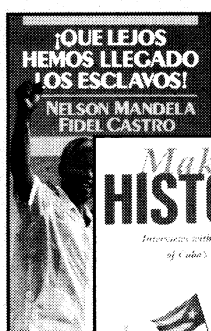
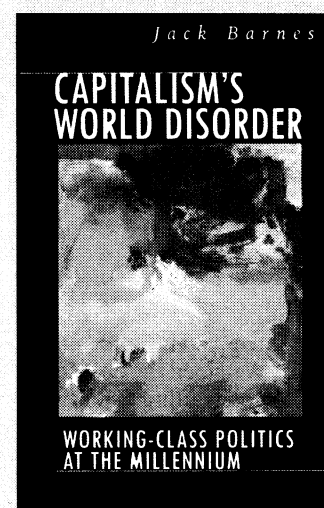
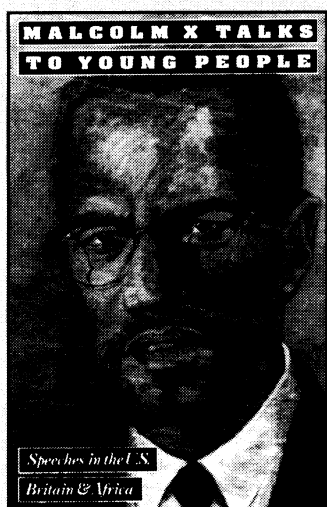
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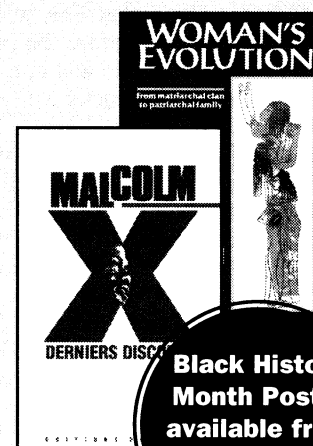
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Rallies, pickets bolster Overnite strikers

Continued from back page

dent James Hoffa, who said, "We're not going to back down, we're not going to run out of money."

Dana Graf, an Overnite striker in Kansas City, told the rally, "The fight at Overnite is just now gearing up. I want to thank everyone for helping to fight the worst labor law violator that has ever faced the working man." A press release by the Teamsters said that more than 1,000 unfair labor practices complaints have been filed against Overnite.

"The Teamsters came out with a contract proposal that was fair," stated Tom Henley, a striker from St. Louis who has worked at Overnite for 13 years. "Overnite came out and said they couldn't afford it. And then they're spending \$10 - \$15 million a year fighting us, and they can't afford it? There needs to be more rallies to let the general public know what's going on. This strike doesn't only affect truck drivers, it affects carpenters, miners, anybody who's got a union."

In Miami, some 50 strikers and their supporters rallied January 12 in front of Overnite's terminal, the first such rally in three months.

Supporters of the strike came from other Teamsters-organized companies such as UPS, Yellow Freight, Consolidated Freight, Roadway, and ABF. Members of the machinists union, transportation union, and plumbers union also joined the action. A Teamster member who works at Roadway said he came because, "this is our fight too."

Thirty or so truck drivers and dock workers are on strike here. Sam Collins, who has worked at Overnite for nine years, said, "People think the strike is about money. But it's about the way they treat people; they would write you up for anything." The company uses any excuse to write up people and to fire them, striker Israel Morejón explained. From wearing union T-shirts and hats to being late even just a few

for the Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority, said he arrived late "due to work, but I came to show my support. An injury to one is an injury to all. I hate to see the working class get beat down like this."

David Reeves is a striker with 27 years seniority. "I loved the rally," he said. "We don't have enough information on the strike and we learned some today. We have sup-

port even though it does not show up every day."

In St. Louis, some 75 members of Teamster locals 600 and 688 turned out to picket an "appreciation" dinner given by Overnite for scab truck drivers. Strikers from Overnite and Teamster members from many trucking terminals, including UPS and Airborne Express, lined the side of the parking lot and

jeered at the scabs as they entered the banquet hall where the dinner was held. There were only about 20 cars in the parking lot.

Rollande Girard, a member of the International Association of Machinists Local 1126; Don Pane from Atlanta; and Alyson Kennedy from St. Louis contributed to this article.

Boeing employees push back concessions

BY SCOTT BREEN

SEATTLE - More than 1,000 unionized engineers and technical workers rallied outside the Boeing Company's corporate offices in Seattle January 7. They chanted "Strike, strike, strike!" waving picket signs reading, "I'll Strike If I Have To," and occasionally blocking traffic.

When asked why there was such a large and boisterous turnout, one Boeing worker said, "They have pushed us too far." Members of the Society of Professional Engineering Employees in Aerospace (SPEEA) rejected the "last and final offer" from the Boeing Company by a 98 percent margin in December. SPEEA represents some 22,300 engineers and technical workers at Boeing.

Boeing said the original contract was a "fair and competitive" offer, and expressed

disappointment with the vote. The rally, however, confirmed the membership's determination to reject company takebacks. "I've worked at Boeing for 30 years, and it's about time we finally stood up for our rights," Bob Vos, an engineer at Boeing's Renton plant told the *Tacoma News-Tribune*. "The company doesn't realize the depth of feeling here in SPEEA. I think today will show it to them."

On January 13, Boeing's negotiators withdrew their main take away proposals: to make these employees pay 10 percent of their medical, increased deductibles and copayments, and force them to work weekends as a normal shift, thereby avoiding paying premium overtime pay. Many SPEEA members were proud that their efforts had forced Boeing to back down. "I've never seen so much solidarity among the members," explained Mike

Freeland, a mechanical engineer. According to press reports, engineers would receive raises from a "salary pool" equaling 8 percent of their total pay in the first year of the new contract, and 4 percent in each of the next two years. Technicians would get raises from a pool of 5 percent the first year, followed by 4 percent annually.

However, these pay raise amounts are not guaranteed across the board, but would be set individually by their supervisors, a sore point with many. In addition, this will allow the company to widen divisions within each work group as it arbitrarily gives some employees larger raises than others in the same classification. SPEEA's leadership has urged members to ratify the three-year pact.

Scott Breen is a member of the International Association of Machinists at Boeing.

MILITANT LABOR FORUMS

CALIFORNIA Los Angeles

The Crisis in Education and the L.A. Schools. High school students speak out. Fri., Jan. 28, 7:30 p.m. 2546 W. Pico Blvd. Tel: (213) 380-9460.

ILLINOIS Chicago

Challenges Facing Today's Labor Struggles: Union Fighters and Strikers Speak Out. Speakers: Bill Wheat, member United Auto Workers Local 974, fighting termination by Caterpillar; Theodore Wynn, member United Steelworkers of America Local 15271, former striker at Tool and Engineering Co.; Overnite striker; Harvey McArthur, Socialist Workers Party, member of United Food and Commercial Workers Local 100-A. Sat., Jan. 29, 7:00 p.m. Dinner 5:30 p.m. 1223 N. Milwaukee Ave. Donation: \$4. Dinner: \$6. Tel: (773) 342-1780.

MASSACHUSETTS Boston

Why the U.S. Cold War Against Cuba Doesn't End. Speaker: Brock Satter, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., Jan. 28, 7:30 p.m. *Codman Square, 683 Washington St., Dorchester.* Donation: \$4. Tel: (617) 282-2254.

MICHIGAN Detroit

Stop Washington's Assault on Democratic Rights—From Anti-terrorist Raids to Spy Scares. Fri., Jan. 28, 7:30 p.m. 7414 Woodward Ave. Donation: \$4. Tel: (313) 875-0100.

NEW JERSEY Newark

Farmers Fight for Their Land and Battle Sex Discrimination. Speakers: Anna Marie Codario, Mary Ordille, Mary Visconti, Angelo DeFelice. Sun., Jan. 30, 5:00 p.m. Dinner: 4:00 p.m. 874 Halsey St. Donation: \$4. Dinner: \$6. Tel: (973) 643-3341.

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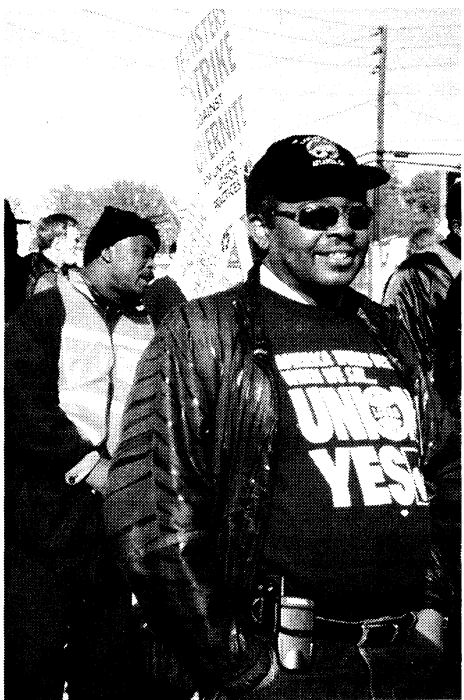
Grand Opening of Pathfinder Bookstore.

Speaker: Olympia Newton, Young Socialist national leader. Newton will speak on the newest Pathfinder title *Making History: Interviews with Four Generals of Cuba's Revolutionary Armed Forces*. Sat., Jan. 29, 7:30 p.m. Reception 6:00 p.m. 711 E. Passyunk (one block below South and 5th Sts.) Donation: \$5. Tel: (215) 627-1237.

BRITAIN

London

Elián González used as a Hostage in U.S. Government Campaign Against the Cuban Revolution. Fri., Jan. 28, 7:00 p.m. 47 The Cut. Donation: £2. Tel: 0171-928-7993.



Militant/Don Pane

Participants in rally in Atlanta, January 14, held to build solidarity with striking Overnite truck drivers.

minutes.

In the months leading up to the strike, "It was constant harassment and intimidation," said Juan Pastrana. "We faced the choice of either staying inside and waiting to be fired or going on strike and seeing if they would sign a contract."

Two days later 250 people rallied in Atlanta to support the strikers at the Overnite terminal there. The picket line swelled to more than 100 people before the rally began. When trucks came in and out, picketers made room for the trucks while shouting at the drivers.

About 100 rally participants were in town from New England states for the Martin Luther King Day march in Atlanta on January 17. They included members of the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees, USWA, Teamsters, and the Coalition of Black Trade unionists (CBTU).

Speakers at the rally included Linda Chavez-Thompson from the national AFL-CIO, and Bill Lucy from the CBTU. "Our fight is very strong. The rally made me feel good and strong. We need more support like this," said Jerry Wilson, a striker who worked for Overnite for nine years.

Union member Robert Peavy, a mechanic

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Working-class leaders, not social engineers

The excerpt below is taken from "Capitalism's Deadly World Disorder," a talk given April 10, 1993, at a regional socialist educational conference held in Greensboro, North Carolina, and the following day to a similar gathering in Des Moines, Iowa. The talk reported the decisions of a meeting the previous weekend in New York City of the Socialist Workers Party National Committee, youth leaders of the SWP, and leaders of communist leagues in several other countries. The entire talk appears in *Capitalism's World Disorder: Working-Class Politics at the Millennium*. Copyright © 1999 by Pathfinder Press, reprinted by permission. Subheadings are by the *Militant*.

BY JACK BARNES

The biggest lie supporters of capitalism tell about socialists is that we are trying to create a utopia, mess with people's lives, and engineer a massive social experiment. You want to play God with the lives of other human beings, they charge. Big governments and bureaucracy are proven enemies of common people—why can't you socialists ever learn? That is the opposite of the truth. In fact, communists are less inclined in that direction than any group of people on the face of the earth. As Marx put it, when writing about the Paris Commune of 1871, revolutionary-minded workers

from the pages of Capitalism's World Disorder

"have no ready-made utopias to introduce.... They know that in order to work out their own emancipation, and along with it that higher form to which present society is irresistibly tending by its own economic workings, they will have to pass through long struggles, through a series of historic processes, transforming circumstances and men."¹

Communists are materialists, dialectical materialists. We start with facts, with social realities, and how they develop and change over history — how they are shaped by shifting productive relations, social labor, and revolutionary activity. We know that our class and its toiling allies, who make up the majority of humanity, cannot organize the world on new foundations *as we are*. And a state bureaucracy cannot do it for us, either. We must change ourselves. On this, we are "Guevarists" to the core.

"To build communism it is necessary, simultaneous with the new material foundations, to build the new man," Che Guevara wrote in his 1965 article "Socialism and Man in Cuba."² We agree. Workers can and will change ourselves as we go about changing the material foundations of our relations to each other. But this cannot be done without tearing

down the brutal class divisions that underlie all social relations today and that will lead through war and fascism to a culmination too horrible to even imagine — unless our class organizes to take power out of the hands of the capitalists.

There is only one real equality possible in today's class-divided world — *political* equality. And it only becomes possible in the revolutionary workers movement. It only becomes possible as those who make up a fighting workers vanguard collectively prepare ourselves for the battles to rid society of every vestige of exploitation, oppression, and discrimination.

The socialist revolution is not the end of recorded history, as Stalinist ideologues have tended to present it in order to rationalize the counterrevolutionary course of the parasitic caste and its claim to have established socialism in a single country. No, the workers revolution is the *beginning* of truly human history.

What is most important about the workers revolution is not the particular property changes that will sweep society directly in its wake — although without them, nothing further would be possible — but the fact that its victory opens other revolutions, such as the historic revolution for women's emancipation. That will not be settled just by overthrowing the capitalist state and declaring the class struggle over. The new possibilities opened by a revolutionary victory, however, will lay the material foundations on which women's liberation can be achieved and precipitate an explosion in the fight for real economic and social equality by the millennia-long oppressed sex. Similarly, all the manifold forms of class oppression bequeathed by thousands of years of property systems will for the first time be open to being vanquished.

Resistance will mount

Despite the refusal of the labor officialdom in the United States or in other imperialist countries to organize the working class to use union power, workers continue to press for ways through their class organizations to mount resistance to the capitalists' assaults. I asked comrades from the United Kingdom last week about the actions by coal miners over the past few months against the government's planned pit closures and layoffs. Members of the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) have organized two one-day work stoppages, one of them just last week in collaboration with the rail workers union. And there were two big miners demonstrations in London last October. Comrades say miners tell them it is better taking some action than just accepting the government's assault and doing nothing, and we've had good sales of the *Militant* and of Pathfinder books and pamphlets at these protests. Resistance always increases broader political interests among workers.

That same attitude can be seen among miners at the Thorseby mine in Nottingham, comrades say. Thorseby is one of the three largest mines organized by the anti-NUM union —



Workers and peasant rally in Petrograd, Russia, 1917. The new possibilities opened by a revolutionary victory will enable working people to vanquish "all the manifold forms of class oppression bequeathed by thousands of years of property systems."

the Union of Democratic Miners — that was built up during the Thatcher period to weaken the NUM. Paul Galloway, a comrade in the communist movement in the UK, has been a union fighter in that mine for a long time. During the great 1984-85 miners strike in Britain, coal was cut at the Thorseby mine every day. At the conclusion of that year-long strike, the NUM was finally forced back to work by the failure of the rest of the union officialdom in the United Kingdom to organize decisive solidarity action. That was Thatcher's greatest victory during her years in office. The other stuff she is credited with — strengthening the economy, the privatizations — that is all nonsense. But the British rulers notched up a real victory in 1985. And throughout that entire strike, the hardest fought in Great Britain for more than a decade, coal was cut at Thorseby every day, despite every effort by the NUM to stop it.

Well, a week ago, when both the coal miners and the rail workers across the United Kingdom were engaged in a one-day stoppage against the pit closures, the NUM put up a picket line at Thorseby that was respected by members of the Union of Democratic Miners. Not one miner went into that mine and not one piece of coal was cut!

I do not raise this example because I expect such actions to lead to massive class battles right now in Britain, or even to short-run labor victories. No single group of workers can jump that far ahead of the rhythms of resistance of the broader working-class vanguard. Nor do I have such expectations from the resistance we have been seeing here in the United States: the fight by the drywallers in southern California to defend their union hiring hall; the strike by members of the United Steelworkers union against Trinity Industries in Bessemer, Alabama; or the strike earlier this year by 7,000 United Mine Workers mem-

bers against Peabody Coal, and the fight looming next month between the UMW and the Bituminous Coal Operators Association.

But these acts of resistance are all part of human beings changing, of refusing to be coerced into acquiescence regardless of the rulers' efforts. It is in these struggles that workers find space to practice politics, and that people of all ages gain experience.

We should not talk about these struggles primarily in terms of economics. In depression conditions, with the working class facing the kinds of social assaults we have discussed, the important questions are not economic — because workers cannot reorganize the economy yet. The working class must organize a victorious socialist revolution before that becomes possible.

But workers today *can* fight to defend ourselves and other working people against employer and government attacks. We *can* fight for protection against the ravages of capitalism. The questions confronting the working class are *political*. What kind of attitudes, what sense of dignity, what kind of class perspective can transform individuals and better prepare us to fight to take political power out of the hands of the rulers? That is important to people involved in demonstrations and strikes, and they want to talk about it. That is what they want to read about. They want to read about other workers who are resisting. They want to know what other workers are thinking, and how they are organizing to wage an effective fight.

1. Karl Marx, "The Civil War in France," in Marx and Engels, *Collected Works*, vol. 22, (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1986), p. 335.

2. Ernesto Che Guevara and Fidel Castro, *Socialism and Man in Cuba* (New York: Pathfinder, 1989), p. 6.

—25 AND 50 YEARS AGO—

25 CENTS
THE MILITANT
A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY/PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE

January 31, 1975

WASHINGTON, D.C.—A bitter wind whipped around the White House Jan. 15, but it failed to deter 4,500 demonstrators, the overwhelming majority of them Black, who were marching here to demand jobs.

The protest was part of a national day of actions against unemployment and in commemoration of the birthday of Martin Luther King Jr.

The marchers — high school and college students, church and community activists, and trade unionists — chanted "Jobs for All!" and sang civil rights songs as they wound their way around the White House. Clusters of Black government employees gathered at the street corners to cheer them on, some joining the demonstration.

Meanwhile, well-dressed business executives and government officials, sitting in their limousines at the White House curb, peered sullenly out at the crowd.

Many of the marchers were out of work. They quickly picked up the spontaneous chant of one group of high school students: "We want a J-O-B so we can E-A-T!"

THE MILITANT
PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE
NEW YORK, N.Y. FIVE (5) CENTS

January 30, 1950

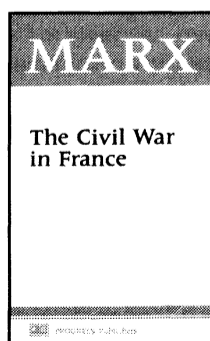
Truman is preparing to intervene personally and directly against the militant coal miners, who have been battling courageously for eight months for wage increases, a strengthened welfare and pensions program, and the retention of union security safeguards.

The pretext for the threatened intervention, which may take the form of a Taft-Hartley injunction under the "national emergency" clause, is the refusal of some 70,000 soft coal miners, primarily in the mines of the steel corporations, to discontinue their strike against the stalling of the operators.

Through a statement by Dr. James Boyd, Director of the Bureau of Mines, to the Senate Labor and Public Welfare Committee yesterday, the Truman administration laid the basis for Taft-Hartley action by claiming that coal production has declined to the point where "the national economy, health and welfare is now or soon will be imperiled."

Last week, the coal company stores, like those of U.S. Steel's H.C. Frick Coke Co., began to cut off the miners' credit. It is a tribute to the miners' union that in the face of these odds, they are still full of fight, defiant as ever.

for further reading



The Civil War in France

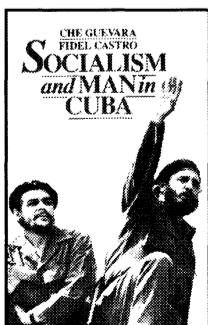
Karl Marx

"The historical significance of the Paris Commune is delineated in short, powerful strokes, but with such trenchancy, and above all such truth as has never again been attained in all the mass literature on this subject," Engels said of this address, written by Marx for the International Workingmen's Association on the government formed by an uprising of the Paris workers in 1871. \$5.00

Socialism and Man in Cuba

Ernesto Che Guevara and Fidel Castro

Guevara's best-known presentation of the political tasks and challenges in leading the transition from capitalism to socialism. Includes Castro's 1987 speech on the 20th anniversary of Guevara's death. Also available in Spanish, French, Farsi, and Swedish. \$3.50



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A confident answer to racism

The dignified, firm, and confident march in Columbia, South Carolina, was a resounding answer by working people to racism and the increasingly harsh and antihuman attacks by the employers and their government. Overwhelmingly African-American—with a layer of whites, especially youth—the marchers demonstrated which social class must be, and will be, the bearer of culture and civilization into the new millennium.

From every city and rural area across the state, swelled by others who decided to take a stand from many other parts of the country, the mass outpouring demanding “take down” the symbol of oppression and brutality that is the Confederate battle flag was heard loud and clear in state capitals across the country and by the twin parties of the wealthy minority in Washington.

“Your heritage is my slavery,” was a sign carried by many. The heritage of youth and working people lies not with the Confederate battle flag, but with the war to defeat the slavocracy in the South. It lies with General William Sherman’s march to the sea, with which the Union Army broke the back of the Confederacy. It is with the battles of workers across the South to establish union organization, to unify and fight for decent wages and social

conditions. It is with the historic battle to bring down Jim Crow segregation, pushing back the ability of the employers to divide working people and to justify the super-exploitation and denial of rights because of the color of one’s skin.

But as marches in Columbia, Atlanta, Decatur, and in hundreds of other cities showed, these are burning questions today. The cop assault on longshoremen protesting union-busting moves in Charleston, South Carolina, is further evidence of that fact.

The depth and breadth of the new proletarian movement arising—of men and women in towns and rural areas; of farmers; of unionists and workers fighting for a union; and of those fighting against oppression and for human dignity—came forth in an especially powerful way this past week.

Tens of thousands took to the streets to win Martin Luther King Jr.’s birthday as a federal holiday. Many, including worker-correspondents writing in this paper, said the day could be used to continue to march, demonstrate, and rally to press forward struggles for social justice and equality. Tens of thousands are using the day to do so, giving inspiration to others to join in.

Washington: the nuclear rogue

The warmakers who rule this country suffered a setback on January 18 as their new antimissile system failed in a major experiment. The sense of disappointment in the media, reflecting the cold-blooded intentions of the rulers, was palpable.

Another test is planned for April or May. Success would pave the way for the war president Clinton to give the go-ahead to deployment of a “shield” based in the United States and a “theater” version based on Washington’s allies in Asia. Whether the test succeeds or fails, however, the U.S. imperialists will continue to pour resources into achieving their target of a first-strike nuclear capacity. With such an edge they aim to throw their weight around even more, especially against the workers states—above all, the major nuclear-armed powers of China and Russia.

As the statements by their diplomatic representatives cited in our report on Russia’s invasion of Chechnya indicate, Beijing and Moscow clearly understand they are the target of this policy. Moscow, in particular, feels under the gun. Since the U.S.-led offensive against Yugoslavia last year, the White House has treated the Kremlin with hostility and contempt. Washington has promoted the expansion of the European military alliance it dominates,

until NATO’s shadow is cast over the borders of the former Soviet Union.

Washington’s criticism of Russia’s invasion of Chechnya is driven by the rulers’ perception that Russia will not be reformed back to capitalism, but must be forced. It also suits the U.S. rulers to see instability in an oil-rich region where they already have interests and where they plan to become more involved.

As the comments by right-wing journalist William Safire indicate, the imperialists are well aware of Russia’s capacity to defend itself with nuclear weapons, and of Moscow’s recent affirmation of its right to use them. This explains why the imperialists are racing to develop a new generation of weapons. Safire also urges the administration to step up its criticisms of the Chechnya adventure.

Working people around the world need to oppose Washington’s diplomatic and scientific preparations for military confrontation with the workers states. The labor movement must defend those territories against imperialism. We need to forge an international movement that can wrest power from the warmakers. The Russian revolution of 1917 and the early 1920s, and the Cuban revolution since 1959, have already blazed the trail for us.

Catastrophe in Venezuela

In response to the massive mud slide that devastated densely populated sections of Venezuela, the U.S. rulers offered body bags and more troops. In contrast, the revolutionary government in Cuba immediately sent 400 doctors and hospital workers who promised to stay as long as is necessary. The rains led to the deaths of some 50,000 people and left another half million homeless. This social disaster cannot be blamed on the forces of nature.

The tens of thousands of working people who lost their lives, homes, and livelihoods were among 3 million people forced to live in impoverished conditions on the side of deforested mountain slopes near the capital city of Caracas. Unable to make a living elsewhere, they migrated from the countryside in the hope of finding jobs and a better life. That it was a disaster waiting to happen—as with similar situations throughout Latin America—was well known to the capitalist rulers of Venezuela and the imperialist exploiters in the United States.

Venezuela is an oil-rich country. It is the third largest exporter of crude oil into the United States, after Saudi Arabia and Mexico. Yet nearly 80 percent of its 23 million people live below the poverty line, and its debt to imperialist banks stands at more than \$23 billion. This situation is a result of imperialist plunder imposed through monopoly control, unequal terms of trade, and forced un-

derdevelopment.

The everyday nightmare of working people can strike home with horrendous consequences when a natural disaster arises. This is true whether it’s a mud slide in Venezuela or the effects of Hurricane Mitch a year earlier in Nicaragua and Honduras.

At the end of December, Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez turned down Washington’s offer of “aid,” saying he would welcome the sending of some bulldozers, tractors, and other heavy equipment, but not the hundreds of U.S. troops being sent along with it. Washington already has about 120 U.S. soldiers stationed in the country, and is boosting its military aid to nearby Columbia to the tune of \$1.6 billion over the next two years.

Washington is concerned first and foremost with protecting the investments and profits of U.S. corporations, and ensuring that the interest payments on the debt keep flowing into the hands of the wealthy coupon-clippers and bankers. That’s why its response to social disasters like in Venezuela is to deepen its military involvement.

Working people should demand that the Clinton administration send massive, unconditional aid to Venezuela with no strings attached. We should also call for the cancellation of the foreign debt of all countries in Latin America and throughout the Third World.

entrance to the downtown shipping terminal was lined with police wearing riot helmets and carrying wooden clubs. Armored cars were seen driving through the terminal gates.” The cops used dogs against the unionists and hit one with a car. A photo on the newspaper’s web site shows police chasing down workers with clubs in the air.

The workers hurled rocks, bricks, and other objects at the police. The dock workers had been holding informational picket lines since December. The night before the cops’ assault, two picketers were confronted by 100 Charleston police and state troopers.

‘Gun control’ in Cuba

In the letters column last week reader Jimmy Harkin asked, “Since Cuba has the death penalty and gun control, where do you stand on those issues?” Issues like “gun control,” and the death penalty are class questions that cannot be abstracted from the realities of capitalist society and which class holds state power.

Discussing these questions in relation to Cuba helps get right at this point.

DISCUSSION WITH OUR READERS

The Cuban people, armed through militias, trade unions, and the revolutionary armed forces have kept the mightiest imperial power at bay for more than four decades.

Their revolution stands as a shining example of defense of sovereignty and independence for workers and peasants throughout the semicolonial world. There, a revolutionary leadership led the toilers to overturn a U.S.-backed dictatorship in 1959 and replaced it with a workers and farmers government. The new government deepened popular mobilizations that resulted in the expropriations of foreign and domestic capitalists and landlords.

The course followed by Cuba’s revolutionary leadership incurred growing political, economic, and military hostility from Washington, which has pursued a policy of unrelenting enmity against the Cuban government, including slander campaigns, direct military intervention, and the threat of nuclear war.

Nearly 40 years ago the Cuban people soundly defeated a U.S.-backed mercenary attack through the mobilization of nearly the entire population. While the U.S. rulers have not abandoned the idea of another military assault if the opportunity arose, they are “well aware of the price of an invasion,” Cuban Gen. Néstor López Cuba explained in a 1997 interview. His remarks are published in the new Pathfinder title *Making History: Interviews with Four Generals of Cuba’s Revolutionary Armed Forces*.

Thus, “gun control” in Cuba means working people control the guns, tanks, warplanes, and all other weaponry in the country. Millions of working people are organized into Territorial Troops Militias throughout the island. In addition, the union movement helps organize workers into Production and Defense Brigades. The brigades are voluntary units organized to protect major industrial facilities and other vital sites. They were formed in the 1980s as part of the government’s policy to help prepare the Cuban population in all aspects of military defense—a policy known as the “war of the entire people.”

In 1997, a reporting team for the *Militant* witnessed coordinated rallies, demonstrations, and military training exercises as part of a national Day of Defense. They watched 100 workers at the Copacabana hotel in western Havana participating in grenade-throwing practice organized by the Production and Defense Brigade. Some 400,000 people took part in military exercises in the capital and the province of Havana.

Under this premise the basic mission of Cuba’s Revolutionary Armed Forces is to guarantee that each Cuban has a rifle, land mine, and grenade to defend the country—“weapons that are the least expensive,” López Cuba explained. A relatively poor country like Cuba cannot afford expensive and sophisticated weaponry, he stated, but this is not necessary since Cuba’s military policy is strictly defensive and popular in character.

A similar approach can be taken on the issue of the death penalty. Again this is a class question. Under bourgeois society, capital punishment is used by the wealthy as a weapon of terror against working people, ultimately to intimidate working-class fighters who dare to stand up to the capitalist oppressors. In the United States almost all inmates sitting on death row are of working-class origin.

The death penalty has been used very sparingly in Cuba over the past two decades. This is done by a revolutionary leadership that uses state power to advance the interests of workers and farmers in the country and defend their conquests amidst unending imperialist hostilities.

Last year, Cuba’s National Assembly enacted a new law that could impose the death penalty on government officials who produce, sell, distribute, or possess illegal drugs.

In 1989, Arnaldo Ochoa, a division general, and three other high-ranking officers were arrested, tried, convicted, and executed for hostile acts against a foreign state, drug trafficking, and abuse of office. Ochoa had organized a smuggling operation while heading Cuba’s military mission in Angola.

This course of conduct—corruption, contempt for the revolutionary capacities of working people—is incompatible with the high moral standards and principles required to lead a revolution that is under constant threat by the world’s mightiest imperial power.

—MAURICE WILLIAMS

Battle on Charleston waterfront

Some 600 cops decked in riot gear attacked members of the International Longshoremen’s Association on the

As we go to press . . .

Charleston, South Carolina, waterfront January 20.

An equal number of dock workers had marched to the waterfront to protest use of nonunion labor by Nordana, a Danish shipping firm.

According to the Charleston *Post and Courier*, “The

We're back... part way—With this column, we resume the Great Society. Our continuing rehabilitation from a car accident makes a weekly column unrealistic. But we



Harry
Ring

hope to have it appear reasonably often. Initial columns will feature "oldies but goodies"—items based on clippings that came in around the time of the accident.

We hope readers will help get it current by sending clippings to the Great Society, c/o Pathfinder Books,

2546 W. Pico Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90006. Fax: 213-380-1068.

Knuckleheads only—"Connecticut man judged too smart to be a cop—High test score disqualifies him for job on New London force"—News headline.

'Now they'll call us maroons'—"A Crown Prosecution Service official sold information, including names of 33 informers, to one of the most feared crime families in Britain, a court was told."—The Times, London.

And breathe shallow—Los Angeles area researchers found that the air inside a car can be ten times as polluted as the typical foul air outside. What to do? Avoid rush hour traffic and, in particular, avoid get-

ting stuck behind diesel buses and older model cars

Prime aged ham—The Canadian government approved the use of rust instead of caramel to decorate Black Forest ham. According to industry folks, rust binds better and, besides, it's cheaper. The government assures rust is safe for human consumption.

Safety program—BF Goodrich Aerospace says it's the biggest outfit in the country doing maintenance work for commercial airlines. A federal inspection found planes okayed for service with missing bolts, leaking fuel tanks, and other imperfections. The Federal Aviation Administration refused to shut Goodrich down. Instead, it assured, it would step up its scrutiny of the company's

work.

A widow's mite—A year ago Los Angeles County sheriff Sherman Block, 74, died after a bathroom fall. Now, the county pension board has ruled that Block's death was job related, so his wife's pension will match his full pay, instead of the customary 50 percent. Block was the highest paid public official in the county, knocking down \$233,000 a year.

Tsk—"No Bonus for Eisner, 3 other Disney execs—The chief executive gets only his \$750,000 base salary after lackluster year."—News headline.

Thought for the century—Radio-active poisoning can bring death

"rather soon, and as I understand it from the doctors, without undue suffering. In fact, they say it's a very pleasant way to die."—Gen. Leslie Groves testifying at a November 1945 Senate hearing, and cited in recent *Los Angeles Times* book review. Groves headed up wartime work on the bomb and construction of the bombs that incinerated Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

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Picket killed in New Zealand port dispute

BY STUART NEEDHAM

CHRISTCHURCH, New Zealand—A supporter of the dock workers struggle here was run down by a four-wheel-drive vehicle that had tried to force its way through a picket line December 29. Christine Clark, a local resident and a political activist, died in the hospital two days later from her injuries. Her funeral on January 5 attracted a big turnout of the Lyttelton port workers, who stopped work for the day. At other ports throughout New Zealand, workers ceased work for an hour as a mark of respect.

Stevedoring workers at the port of Lyttelton near Christchurch held a two-day picket at the end of December to oppose the contracting out by the Lyttelton Port Company of its coal receiving and loading operations. On the second day Christine Clark was run down.

About 1.4 million tons of coal are loaded out of the Lyttelton Port each year. Up to 30 workers, who are members of the Rail and Maritime Transport Union, the Waterfront

Workers Union, and the Foremen Stevedores Union, are employed when a coal vessel is in port for loading. The unions offered to reduce the costs of coal handling by \$395,000, which would come directly out of workers' wages and conditions. This was not enough for the Lyttelton Port Company and it awarded the work to G.C. Smith Contracting.

According to a leaflet put out by the unions, the same contracting company recently took over the work of unionized miners in one of the West Coast mines, replacing them with fewer workers and lower pay and conditions.

Workers employed at the port stopped work when the first ship to be loaded by G.C. Smith Contracting—the "Sea Swift"—was expected in Lyttelton. A picket and roadblock on the road leading to the docks was organized and drew up to 200 people, including port workers, Lyttelton residents, and unionists from Christchurch.

The aim of the picket was to gain widespread support for their fight. Cars, trucks, and

buses seeking entry into the wharves were stopped, and the people were given leaflets while workers explained their fight before they were let through. G.C. Smith Contracting did not attempt to get its workers through the picket or to load the ship. On the second day, at a meeting with union representatives, the

Lyttelton Port Company undertook not to hand over the work for at least another month and agreed to further negotiations with the unions over the coal handling work.

Stuart Needham is a member of the Meat Workers Union (MWU) in Christchurch.

Iowa Teamsters: 'There's never a better time to strike'

BY ROSE ANA BERBEO

DES MOINES, Iowa—Some 100 members of the Teamsters union on strike at the Smurfit Stone Container Corp. staged a spirited mass picket here, turning away at least a couple of potential strikebreakers and receiving many

honks of support from passersby.

Some 190 of about 250 workers at the plant struck December 30. Workers voted down the company's proposed contract 147-19 and then authorized a strike by a 162-1 vote, said Lonnie Matticks, a truck driver with 14 years at the company and a member of the negotiating committee.

According to Robert Cox, a machine operator, the pay raise the company is offering does not cover the rise in the cost of insurance payments. Many workers, whose average pay is less than \$10 per hour, are forced to work overtime every Saturday and up to four hours a day during the week, he said.

The plant produces bags for feed grains, flour, and other products. "We can't survive with what they give us," said Art Alcantar, an ink blender with 30 years at the plant. "If we go back to work, I'll probably die in there because I can't afford to retire."

Picketers have been on duty around the clock, including New Years Eve. While most have never been on strike, at least a dozen workers have. They are members of the Steelworkers union who have been on strike for more than 19 months against Titan Tire in Des Moines.

The Titan workers have been a valuable source of helpful advice and solidarity, said Matticks.

"There's too many people here that work paycheck to paycheck," said Donna Royse, a resin helper with more than 13 years at the plant. "People were scared before, but now they're tired of it. If we don't stand up for what we believe in now, we might as well forget about it." A number of workers standing nearby nodded their heads and chimed in, "It's a new time."

Unemployment is down and "there's never been a better time to strike," said Matticks.

Judge backs Northwest against flight attendants

BY ARLENE RUBINSTEIN

ATLANTA—Flight attendants at Northwest Airlines (NWA) were hit with a temporary restraining order January 5 prohibiting them or their union from "calling, permitting, instigating, authorizing, encouraging, participating in, approving of, or continuing any disruption of Northwest Airlines' normal airline operations."

A federal judge handed NWA this ruling as part of their fight against Teamsters Local 2000, which represents the 11,000 flight attendants. Claiming it cancelled more than 300 flights due to a sick-out organized by the flight attendants, the bosses sought court relief from what it called "guerrilla warfare" in labor relations.

The judge ruled the union is violating the Railway Labor Act, which governs the work force at airlines and railroads. Northwest flight attendants are barred from striking until after a government mediator declares an impasse. The Railway Labor Act, like other government labor legislation, serves to string out negotiations and tie up workers with restrictive regulations.

In an attempt to make it a crime to have a discussion in opposition to a contract, Judge Frank cited as evidence in his decision messages posted by flight attendants on their Internet web page.

Members of Local 2000 have been working under a contract extension for more than three years. The National Mediation Board suspended contract negotiations in December. In 1993, the local gave wage concessions when the company cried poverty. They have not won a pay increase since 1986. Some 9,000 mechanics and cleaners at the airline, represented by the Aircraft Mechanics Fraternal Association, are also without a new contract.

The complaint by Northwest Airlines against Local 2000 names the union, its officers, the coordinators of the union's Contract Action Teams, and Having a Voice in Our Contract committees. In addition, 1-100 John Does and 1-100 Jane Does have also been added in an attempt to intimidate union members not yet named as defendants in the case. In addition, Northwest Airlines has vowed to investigate and discipline hundreds of flight attendants.



Rally by Northwest flight attendants at Detroit-Wayne county airport on June 9, 1999.

Militant/Jay Ressler

These investigations are already underway.

The company's efforts to weaken solidarity among flight attendants is not having the desired results. "The action taken by Northwest against our union only increases the unity I feel with my co-workers," a Los Angeles

flight attendant and Teamster Local 2000 member said in an interview.

Arlene Rubinstein is a member of the Aircraft Mechanics Fraternal Association at NWA in Atlanta.

Pennsylvania school workers walk out after talks fail

BY REBECCA ARENSEN, J.P. CHRYSDALE, AND JAMES MCFADDEN

ASTON, Pennsylvania—"We want to bring attention to what we're being denied by the school administration: Fair Salaries, Benefits, and Respect," said Jo Hamilton, a third year full-time classroom aide at Northly School.

Eighty secretaries, support staff, and teachers aides, represented by the Penn-Delco Educational Support Personnel Association, struck after negotiations failed to reach a contract January 3. The strikers work at six schools and three administrative buildings.

This is the eleventh school walkout in Pennsylvania since August. On the picket line strik-

ers passed out flyers answering the school administration's claim that it is unreasonable to demand a 42 percent wage increase over three years. Workers have not received a raise since July 1997. Support staff, which includes special education, nurses, cafeteria, and playground aides, and part-time secretaries, start at \$6.50 an hour. The union points out that support staff who have worked for the district for more than 24 years are paid a maximum of \$8.13 an hour. In 1997 the district reduced aides' starting pay from \$7.15 to \$6.50 an hour.

District officials went to court on the second day of the strike to seek a temporary restraining order to force the strikers back to work, claiming concerns about student safety

and the needs of special education students.

The judge denied the order but has set a hearing with district and union representatives to review a report detailing the effect the workers absence has on schools.

"We care about these kids. We're not just here because of the dollar," explained Sharon McLaughlin, an office aide picketing Aston Elementary School. "But we'd like to think that the school district values us as employees and has enough respect for us to pay us a decent wage."

Rebecca Arenson, J.P. Chrysdale, and James McFadden are members of the Young Socialists in Philadelphia.

Pressure builds on London to tell truth about Bloody Sunday murder

BY PAUL DAVIES

MANCHESTER, England—"Those responsible for murder have to be accountable to the law," said Michael McKinney leading up to this year's marches in London and Derry, Ireland, demanding justice for 14 Irish civil rights demonstrators gunned down by British Army paratroopers in 1972.

"Some people used to say why not forget about it—it happened years ago," explained McKinney, a spokesperson for the Bloody Sunday relatives, whose brother William was killed on that day. "But something that has always brought Bloody Sunday to the present day is that the people who died have been labeled by the British government as being gunmen and nail bombers. To this day the British government has never retracted that statement."

From the building activities apparent on college campuses and among supporters of Irish freedom, the January 22 marches will attract thousands. "Bloody Sunday — Let the truth be told," is the main demand of the actions, which are also seen as a way to mobilize against British domination of Northern Ireland.

On Jan. 30, 1972, Irish freedom fighters held a mass march in Derry as part of a rising movement demanding civil rights in Northern Ireland. The British army assault and killings were an attempt to put an end to the struggle, which sought democratic rights and an end to internment without trial.

"The parachute regiments were in Belfast a week before Bloody Sunday," said McKinney. "They didn't decide to come to Derry on their own. That decision was made at the highest level. The politicians must be held accountable."

Irish communities responded to the killings by organizing a three-day strike in Derry, as thousands of workers took strike action in the south of Ireland. Protesters in Dublin burnt the British embassy to the ground.

The actions put the British government, which was facing its first nationwide miners strike since 1926, on the defensive.

The government in London organized a cover-up, cleared the soldiers of any wrongdoing, and slandered those who were killed.

As the struggle in Ireland against the British occupation has advanced, and the campaign by the relatives of those killed and injured has continued to win support, cracks in the cover-up have begun to appear. A British soldier who was in Derry on that day says that the demonstrators had been shot with their hands in the air. In 1998 the British government agreed to a new inquiry. Another report released January 5 by Limerick University professor Dermot Walsh revealed evidence of systematic alteration of witness statements by British soldiers that took part in the killings.

McKinney said the inquiry needs to "find out everything and establish the truth. It has the power to recommend that the Department of Public Prosecution prosecute those



Jan. 30, 1999, Bloody Sunday march in Derry, Northern Ireland. Campaign by relatives of those massacred has continued to win support.

responsible."

He also rebutted a new slander aimed at continuing the cover-up. Following a Court of Appeal decision, the Bloody Sunday Inquiry Tribunal concluded that British soldiers involved in the killings "have genuine and reasonable fears for their personal safety...and could face greater risk if they

were identified." It concurred with the court's decision that the soldiers would remain anonymous. "It has always been in our interests to get the truth, not to harm the soldiers," McKinney said.

"We want all the evidence to be heard in Derry," said McKinney, who expected there would be a large turnout from among the

city's largely nationalist population for the hearings. The new inquiry "wasn't handed to us on a plate. We have campaigned vigorously to get where we are now" since forming the Bloody Sunday Justice Campaign.

In addition to the march scheduled for January 22, McKinney reported that the relatives had set up a full-time campaign center in Derry. "In around three months 1,500 people have visited the center, including people from all around the world," he said. Britain's attempts to criminalize nationalist fighters was dealt another setback when a high court judge in Dublin delayed the extradition of Angelo Fusco after a Sinn Fein appeal.

Fusco had been wanted by the British since escaping from a Belfast court in 1981, just before he was convicted of killing a police officer. Carrying signs that read, "No British Justice—No Extradition—Release Angelo Fusco," nationalist protesters, including Sinn Fein president Gerry Adams, demonstrated outside the courthouse, where Fusco was being held.

"We have a right to expect that the days when this state trampled on the rights of [Irish] citizens to secure extradition from this jurisdiction at Britain's behest are over," said Caoimhghin O Caoláin, Sinn Fein representative in the Dublin parliament.

In further evidence that the once-solid, pro-British, forces in Northern Ireland are breaking up, Richard Jameson was shot dead in a feud among Loyalist factions in Portadown in mid-January.

Paul Davies is a member of the Transport and General Workers Union in Manchester. Pete Clifford in London contributed to this article.

Inmates brutalized in Attica revolt win settlement from New York state

BY EMILY FITZSIMMONS

NEW YORK — The state of New York agreed January 4 to pay \$8 million to prisoners who were brutalized during the police assault on the 1971 Attica prison rebellion. The settlement comes 25 years after 1,281 prisoners filed a \$2.8 billion class-action lawsuit against New York state police and prison officials, who stormed Attica in a bloody assault that left 43 dead and more than 300 wounded. A federal judge in 1988 ruled against prisoners' claims on the estate of Nelson Rockefeller, who, as governor of New York in 1971, oversaw the raid.

Lawyers are working to contact those who were plaintiffs in the suit—as many as are still alive—to weigh in by a February 14 deadline on whether they accept the settlement. It will average around \$20,000 per person compensation for injuries and dis-

abilities suffered by inmates who were beaten and tortured by New York state police and national guardsmen. The military force violently retook the prison on September 13, 1971. A separate payment of \$4 million will go toward lawyers' fees.

Arthur Harrison, a former inmate at Attica and plaintiff in the suit, said that he feels a sense of relief and closure, but not justice. "The government didn't admit it did anything wrong. All the inmates wanted was to be treated like human beings. Many died for this. The government didn't want to resolve it peacefully. They wanted to show their strength."

"The uprising at Attica wasn't a planned thing," continued Harrison. "The leadership came out of the struggle, and that's going to keep happening today. The whole world is an Attica situation. It's a class thing, and

more and more people are realizing that."

Demanding better conditions and an end to guard brutality, some 1,500 inmates took over a prison cell block and yard at Attica state prison on September 9, 1971. Well organized, and under a mostly Black leadership, the prisoners sought to put before the public the dehumanizing conditions and the resistance to them within the prisons themselves.

This was occurring only a few years after the explosions in U.S. cities of Black workers and youth against police brutality and grinding social conditions. The list of prisoners' demands ranged from more sanitary food and bathing provisions, to being paid minimum wage for prison labor, to respect for all religions, and an end to censorship by prison officials. They demanded amnesty from prosecution for the rebellion and the firing of Attica warden Vincent Mancusi.

On September 13, New York state police, 1,000 strong, dropped tear gas from helicopters and stormed the prison, firing indiscriminately and killing both hostages and prisoners. Police lies about prisoners slitting each others' throats quickly unraveled as autopsies revealed that all deaths were from gunshots at the hands of the rampaging state troopers.

In other developments, prisoner lockdowns at two maximum security prisons in New York state, Sing Sing and Green Haven, ended on January 14 when it was revealed that live ammunition discovered at Sing Sing on December 24 had been planted by a prison guard. For those three weeks, almost 4,000 prisoners had been confined to their cells for 23 hours a day. The lockdowns took place at the same time that some prisoners had been circulating a leaflet calling for a statewide prison strike over onerous parole restrictions.

Rallies, pickets bolster Overnite strike

BY BILLARTH

KANSAS CITY, Kansas—"We need more of this," said a striking Teamster member at Overnite Transportation after 100 fellow union members from St. Louis joined the picket line.

The 10 workers welcomed the influx of support. Overnite sent out a hired cop, who climbed on top of a trailer and filmed the guests. The large picket line drew the attention of truckers from other companies driving by, who blew their horns in solidarity.

The event came after 600 Teamsters and their supporters rallied here January 12 at the Teamsters union hall. Participants in the rally included delegations from Teamsters

locals in Omaha, Nebraska; Cincinnati, Ohio; Lexington, Kentucky; Wichita and Topeka, Kansas; Memphis, Tennessee; and one of the four Overnite workers who are on strike in Tupelo, Mississippi.

Workers at Overnite went on strike October 24 in a bitter fight to unionize the company. Teamster members around the country have joined the struggle on picket lines and at rallies, which have had an impact on the company's operations.

The strike is an important one for the labor movement, since Overnite is the sixth-largest U.S. trucking firm and the largest nonunion one. It is owned by Union Pacific Railroad, an enormous transportation com-

pany. Workers at the company have been organizing to win union recognition for more than 20 years.

Other unions represented at the rally included the International Association of Machinists, the United Steelworkers of America (USWA), the United Food and Commercial Workers, and the firefighters union. Herb Johnson, secretary-treasurer of the Missouri AFL-CIO, addressed the rally. A number of state, county, and city politicians also spoke, including Missouri lieutenant-governor Roger Wilson.

A number of union officials spoke at the event, including Teamsters General Presi-

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